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What Must The Church Do to Be Saved?

What Must The Church Do to Be Saved?

The Necessity and Possibility of the Unity of Protestantism

By
P. MARION SIMMS, Ph. D.

"Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."

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To

My Wife

the companion of my college and seminary days and the chief earthly inspiration of my work this volume is affectionately dedicated

Gift from the Author

A Prayer for Unity

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who hast purchased an universal Church by the precious blood of Thy Son, we thank Thee that Thou hast called us into the same, and made us members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. Look now, we beseech Thee, upon Thy Church, and take from it division and strife and whatsoever hinders Godly union and concord. Fill us with Thy love, and guide us by Thy Holy Spirit that we may attain to that oneness for which Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, prayed on the night of His betrayal, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen.[1]

[1] This prayer was sent out over Japan in 1900 by the Conference of Missionaries of all denominations held in Tokyo.

Preface

NOTWITHSTANDING the work of a very busy pastorate the writer for some years has been delivering a lecture devoted to the unity of Protestantism. This lecture has been delivered to many churches, religious assemblies, Young Men's Christian Associations and on the lyceum and Chautauqua platforms. It has been received everywhere with sympathetic attention. This volume is the outgrowth of that lecture; and its purpose is to furnish a popular though brief discussion of the whole subject.

It is very difficult for one whose convictions are pronounced to handle questions so vital and concerning which there is such a divergence of honest opinion without the possibility of being accused of extreme statements. The writer can only frankly affirm that he has tried to speak as dispassionately as the facts in the case would allow.

Grateful acknowledgment of indebtedness is made to the Rev. Charles S. Macfarland, Ph. D., secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, for his very helpful criticism of the chapter, "The Abuse of Ecclesiastical Authority"; and to the Rev. Finis King Farr, D. D., instructor in Church History and Missions in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the South, in alliance with Lane Semi-

nary, and to the Rev. Elmer Allen Bess, D. D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Clinton, Iowa, for their valuable criticisms of the whole manuscript.

If the writer may be permitted to contribute the least suggestion which the Master can bless to the good of His Church and Kingdom he will be satisfied.

P. M. S.

Vinton, Iowa.

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Introduction

WE confine our discussions to the unity of the Protestant Church. We hope and believe the day will come when the Roman, the Greek and the Protestant Churches may all be unified, but such an event must necessarily be long distant. Preliminary to this is the unity of Protestantism. When Protestantism is unified, or when at least much has been accomplished in that direction, will probably be soon enough to discuss the unification of the Christian world.

We not only confine our discussion to the unity of Protestantism, but to Protestantism in the United States, because we believe that here the chief contribution to unity must be made. The burden of the evangelization of the world has shifted from the East to the West; and here also lies the chief responsibility in unity. We have unrestricted religious liberties relieved from all the complications of state churches. It is among us that Christianity has its best opportunity to show its highest fruits. If unity is impossible here it is impossible anywhere and everywhere.

The division of the Church is only a symptom of a deep-seated and underlying disease. And the first prerequisite of the physician in any cure is a correct diagnosis, which will determine to what specialist the case must go. We may mollify the symptoms

as occasion and opportunity offer—and that is a legitimate method of reputable physicians—but if we would cure the disease we must strike deeper. When the disease is cured, the troublesome symptoms will disappear.

In every age there has been a tendency to substitute doctrines, forms and ceremonies for the life out of which these things grew. The predominance of that tendency is the secret of our divisions. The underlying disease of the Church, therefore, is a substitution of the forms of Christian life for the life itself. At heart it is only the want of supreme loyalty to Jesus Christ—a subtle and refined form of idolatry—but in essence is it not equally as sinful as the worship of the golden calf? The divisions of Protestantism grow out of a supreme loyalty to lesser things than Christ. This fact is seen in the universal recognition among Protestants that as true, as consecrated, and as faithful Christians exist in other communions as in every one's own.

It is not, therefore, a case for the Christian Science healer, the homeopath, the allopath, or the osteopath. It is not sufficient to persuade ourselves that all is well if we will only just think so. Protestantism is sick and the first step towards any cure is to recognize that one is needed. It is not a pellet of attenuated strychnine to stimulate a sluggish heart that is needed; the need is for a change of heart. It is not a better circulation of an impoverished blood that is needed; it is a deeper application of the blood of Christ—a "second blessing" as it were. It is not a resetting of a few dislocated bones that is

needed; the need is for the immediate removal of a malignant and cancerous growth. It is a case first for the surgeon.

Therefore, if thy creed-subscription causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out; and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that every one of thy shibboleths should perish, and not that the body of Christ should be divided. And if thy traditional forms and ceremonies cause thee to stumble, cut them off, and cast them from thee: for it is profitable for thee that all thy home-made ecclesiastical appendages should perish, and not that the Church of God should lose its power to save the world.

This done it becomes a case for the Great Physician whose power is sufficient, when given a chance, to flood His Church with new life, higher ideals, broader visions, deeper joys and a unity of holier purposes.

Is not the fundamental evil of the Church to-day the same evil that afflicted the Jewish Church in Jesus' day? The Jewish Church had substituted the traditions of men for the law and love of God; it was far more loyal to the externals of religion than to the requirement to do justly and to love mercy. The people had persuaded themselves that loyalty to the accidents of religion was the highest loyalty to their God. They were sincere and honest but they were mistaken. Protestantism has done exactly the same thing it seems to us and with the same sincerity and honesty, and is equally if not incurably mistaken.

If men had not ceased to follow the example of

Paul in knowing nothing but Christ and Him crucified, the Church would certainly never have divided. And no remedy will ever be found except in a return to supreme loyalty to the Master. The supremely loyal to Christ cannot be kept apart. When Christian men seek first His kingdom and His righteousness our divisions will disappear. It is a time for heart-searching and for asking, "Lord, is it I, is it I?"

PART I

Problems Confronting the Church To-day

Behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping
watch above His own.

— *Lowell.*

Hast thou not learn'd what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's ?

— *Cowper.*

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
The youth replies, "I can."

— *Emerson.*

So let it be in God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight,
And strong in Him whose cause is ours
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons He has given —
The Light, and Truth and Love of Heaven.

— *White.*

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I

THE PROBLEMS AT HOME

EVERY age has its peculiar problems, but never in the history of the world have such stupendous problems confronted the Church as confront it to-day. These are critical times. While there is more Christianity in the world than ever before, and more men and women consecrated to the service of God and humanity, there are also larger and more complicated problems and more powerful combinations of evil. It is the history of civilization that its problems grow increasingly complicated with each succeeding age.

1. Some Evils of Our Country

Our problems at home are numerous and serious. Since the Civil War at least thirteen evils [1] among us have increased with a rapidity that is alarming. They are murder, divorce, lynchings, labour riots, municipal corruption, yellow journalism, brutal sports, judicial maladministration, general lawlessness, the consumption of intoxicating liquors, Sabbath desecration, impure shows and graft. In the first nine of these we are said to lead the whole world.

[1] "National Perils and Hopes," Wilbur F. Crafts, Ph. D. The writer is indebted to this volume for much information contained in the discussion of these evils.

We have in the United States annually a frightfully long list of murders and the record grows redder and redder. Dr. Andrew D. White, ex-president of Cornell and ex-ambassador to Germany and Russia, is quoted as authority for the statement, based on an average for eight years, that the number of felonious homicides per year per million of population in different countries is as follows: Canada, three; Germany, four to five; England and Wales, ten to eleven; France, twelve to fifteen; Belgium, fifteen, and the United States over one hundred and twenty-nine. In 1910 we are told that the homicides in the United States were forty-three times greater than in Canada, and seven times greater than in Belgium. And Belgium is considered the worst country in Europe.

Divorces in the United States have increased within forty years (1867–1907) three times as fast as the population, until to-day we have one divorce for every thirteen marriages. Lynchings have become a serious menace to our peace and safety. We have almost a monopoly of this crime. In no other nation are more people lynched than are executed by form of law.

Labour riots are very common and the recent confessions of labour leaders in Los Angeles have shocked the whole world; the successful prosecution of dynamiters in Indianapolis has revealed a desperate situation. But capital is as much to blame as labour for the existing conditions; and the wholesale destruction of life and property as practiced in this country presents a most serious situation.

Municipal corruption has become most flagrant. This condition constitutes one of our very serious problems. Revelations in New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco and Chicago are appalling. The yellow journalism of our country is doing incalculable harm. Brutal sports abound. Judicial maladministration, creating a wide-spread disrespect for law, is one of our most serious problems. Confidence in our courts to a great extent has been lost. Everybody is familiar with the difficulty of bringing the rich to justice. And there is a feeling, wide-spread, that if the rich are brought to justice their penalties do not compare with those of the poorer for smaller offenses. And there is altogether too much ground for such an opinion. Courts and legislatures are believed to be controlled largely by corporate greed. The general lawlessness that results from these suspicions and other causes is a serious situation among us.

The consumption of liquor, notwithstanding the increase of "dry" territory, increases annually. In 1850 the per capita consumption of liquor in the United States was only 4.08 gallons. This steadily increased till 1907 when it reached 23.54 gallons. Then there was a slight decrease till 1910; but this has been followed by the largest per capita consumption in the history of the country. It becomes increasingly evident that we must have something more than the present form of prohibition.

Sabbath desecration is nation-wide. While there seems to be no danger of losing the day as one of rest from labour, there is great danger that the

day will become one of questionable sport and fun. Labour unions stand for a day of rest from labour and the intelligent social service forces of the country will use their influence to the same end. But the growth of Sunday baseball and other questionable amusements shows the drift of the times. Impure shows abound everywhere. The modern picture show with its representation of murder and other evils and exhibited in its darkened hall is doing great harm. Graft is everywhere: we must go to heathen China to find more. We must go to infidel France to find more Sabbath desecration and more impurity among civilized peoples.

Gambling, and the social evil, with its white slave traffic, must be reckoned with. Mormonism may yet be the cause of serious troubles among us. The alienation of certain classes from the Church presents no small problem and the Church alone can cure it. Our incoming millions must be Christianized and assimilated; or as an unassimilated and alien element they will become a serious menace to our highest well-being. The growth of commercialism, greed and the mania for pleasure are seriously affecting the national life. This is but a partial enumeration of the evils that confront the Church at home, but it is a most formidable array.

The growth of state education divorced from religion and the exclusion of the Bible from the public school create an unfortunate condition which needs to be remedied. There is no longer danger in this country from ignorance; the danger is in the secularization of education. The need of to-day is

not that of an educated man, but the educated man plus the moral man. There is a demand for moral leadership and our colleges are not meeting this demand. The moral element is being left out; our colleges are not giving robust morals to the young men; and they cannot give them without religion. In the only training for the young that is desirable religion and education cannot be divorced. If the state cannot furnish religion the Church must do it.

2. The Need for a Larger Social Service

The Church is the mother of all modern social service; she does not recognize some of her children as yet; but she must do so and give them her best attention. She cannot stand apart from the life and activities of the modern world if she would, except at the price of her chief influence for good. She must enter the fight against every form of evil known, economic injustice, corrupt politics, dishonest business methods and antiquated methods of dealing with the criminal. If the Church is to occupy the place which rightfully belongs to her in the future of our country she must enlarge her social sympathies and service. Her work must take a larger sociological direction. This service calls for the concerted action of all the friends of righteousness.[1]

The disadvantages of sectarianism were never so apparent as to-day; they were never so numerous as

[1] "Christianity and the Social Crisis," by Walter Rauschenbusch, has a very helpful discussion on "Why has Christianity never undertaken the work of Social Reconstruction?" pp. 143–210.

to-day, when the Church is called to a common policy. Industrial progress within recent years has gone forward with an almost incredible pace. Modern invention and discovery have revolutionized the world's industry and created a new social order. Christianity has created a new civilization which it must inspire and direct.

Many features of the present industrial situation demand immediate relief. "The cruelties of greed, the heartlessness of ambition and the cold indifference of corporate selfishness" create serious conditions. But the trouble is not all on one side; it is three cornered. On one side is capital insisting on more than a just share of the products of industry; on the other side is labour, sometimes insisting on a larger wage than is consistent with the perpetuation of the industry; and behind both of these is the great bargain-hunting multitude. The problems created by the situation can be solved only by a proper interpretation and application of the teachings of the Son of Man. It is for the Church to make this interpretation and to assist in the application of these principles. In this work the Church must be identified with no particular class but with the people as a whole.

"The Church now confronts the most significant crisis and the greatest opportunity of its long career. In part its ideals and principles have become the working basis of organizations for social and industrial betterment which do not accept its spiritual leadership and which have been estranged from its fellowship. We believe, not for its own sake but in

the interest of the kingdom of God, the Church must not merely acquiesce in the movements outside of it which make for human welfare, but must demonstrate not by proclamation but by deeds its primacy among all the forces which seek to lift the plane and better the conditions of human life." [1]

[1] "The Church and Modern Industry." Report of the Commission on the Church and Social Service, adopted in Philadelphia, December, 1908, by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, p. 15.

II

THE PROBLEMS ABROAD

THE most stupendous problem confronting the Christian world to-day is the evangelization and Christianization of the non-Christian nations. There has never been a period in the world's history when such vast multitudes of people were in the midst of such far-reaching changes, educational, political, industrial and religious.[1]

1. Reconstructive Forces in Heathen Lands

Foreign missions have at last become a matter of serious interest to the civilized world; to the intelligent outside of the Church as well as to those inside. We have reached a supreme crisis in our Christian civilization due to the revolutionary changes now in progress among non-Christian peoples everywhere. We must Christianize them or they will paganize us; we must do it in self-defense if for no higher reason.

In Japan and India the government has established systems of education and hundreds of thousands of students are being educated. China whose educational system has remained unchanged for a thousand

[1] The best literature in print on this general subject is the Reports of the World Missionary Conference of 1910, held at Edinburgh; nine volumes (Revell).

years is rapidly being revolutionized. Thousands of her students are studying in Japan, the United States and Europe. Both China and Korea are rapidly establishing systems of government education. China alone will soon enroll millions of students. Turkey, Persia, Egypt and other non-Christian countries also are rapidly establishing government educational institutions. These all provide for secular education; Christian teaching is excluded from these schools. It is the Western education these peoples desire and no power can prevent them from getting it. But education alone will not improve them morally. Secular education will undermine their inherited religions and leave them practically without religion. And education without Christianity will make the non-Christian nations a serious menace to the Christian civilization of the world. It will mean the putting into savage hands of civilized instruments and skill which they may use for savage purposes.

The great demand for teachers of the Western education furnishes the Church a coveted opportunity to reach these peoples. The problem can be met only by a great expansion of Christian educational missions.

There is a growing spirit of nationalism among the non-Christian nations everywhere—in Latin America, the native sections of South Africa, India, Turkey, Siam, Egypt and other nations. There are widespread movements among these peoples for national independence. Japan after fifty years of missionary work has taken her place as a world power and the dominant power of the Orient. What Western edu-

cation has done for her has profoundly influenced other nations.

This spirit of nationalism in China has led to the establishment of a republic within a year. Since the Boxer trouble China has made more rapid progress than Japan ever made in the same length of time. Industrially as well as educationally China is in the midst of changes that are revolutionary. Railroads, telegraph lines and a postal system are being rapidly extended. Between three hundred and four hundred newspapers are now published in China. The outcome of the new republic will be watched with a great deal of interest.

2. The Necessity for Guidance and Inspiration

These new movements cannot be crushed; they ought not to be. The Church ought to rejoice in them. And yet they are attended with the greatest possibilities of evil. If they are not informed, guided, purified and inspired with the Christian ideal, what can we expect? These peoples will become educated, powerful and independent and at no distant day. But what will they do with their new-gained power? We begin to understand Napoleon's remarks concerning China: "There sleeps a giant. Let him sleep." "When China is moved it will move the world." Well may the Christian world fear changes now taking place in China and elsewhere. Not only the evangelization, but the Christianization of the nations is necessary to our own safety.

Many features of the situation are very encourag-

ing. Never before were there such movements of men towards Christ as are found to-day among the non-Christian nations. The Church in Japan has increased seventy per cent. in ten years. The last ten years have been the most fruitful ever known on the foreign field. In 1887 Korea had only seven native Christians, who behind closed doors celebrated the first communion service in Korea. There are now 200,000 Christians in Korea, including catechumens. The Church is growing at the rate of thirty per cent. annually. After the first thirty-five years of missionary work in China there were only six converts. To-day there are more than 200,000 in China. The Church is increasing at the rate of one hundred per cent. in seven years. The ignorant and the educated are being reached in large numbers. Everywhere in non-Christian countries large numbers of the people are ready for the Gospel.

In Volume I of the *Report of the World Missionary Conference* (page 48) it is impressively declared that "The cumulative and crowning consideration calling the Church to undertake promptly and to carry forward earnestly and thoroughly a campaign to take the Gospel to all the non-Christian world is seen in the coincidence of the series of convincing facts and providences . . . (that follow): Never before have facts and movements synchronized. The non-Christian world now accessible, open and responsive; the non-Christian religions losing their age-long hold on certain classes on the one hand, and yet on the other hand, stirred to new activity, enterprise, and antagonism; the alarming and rapid spread of un-

Christian and anti-Christian influences from so-called Christian lands; peoples waking from long sleep and whole nations in a plastic condition, but the character and spirit of their civilization soon to become fixed; the threatening menace of the great development and enlarging plans of systems of secular education; a growing spirit of nationalism and of racial pride and antagonism, with all this may mean for or against the spread of Christ's kingdom; a spiritual tide of missionary success rising and in many places at its flood; the possibility of reaping enormous fruitage as a result of long working of God's certain laws. Surely all these facts and factors, together with the perils and possibilities of the home Church as determined by its attitude at such a time and in face of such an opportunity, constitute a conjunction brought about by the hand of the Living God, and should be regarded by the Christian Church as an irresistible mandate."

These conditions are God's challenge to His Church for greater things. What shall the answer be?

PART II

The Discreditable Situation within the Church

If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.—*Jesus.*

I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.—*Paul.*

The dispute about religion,
And the practice of it seldom goes together.
—*Dr. Young.*

"Orthodoxy, my Lord," said Bishop Warburton, in a whisper,—"orthodoxy is my doxy,—heterodoxy is another man's doxy."—*Joseph Priestly.*

Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but—live for it.—*Colton.*

I

THE UNCHRISTIAN DIVISIONS

THE fight for religious freedom and liberty waged in the times of the Reformation, and often in the heat of passion, not unnaturally led to division. Whether any division was justifiable or not—and that question is not raised—the matter of division has certainly been carried to an absurd extreme.

1. Present Divisions in the United States

The Protestant Church in the United States is divided into twenty or more families and these families have been subdivided into one hundred and sixty-four separate Protestant denominations.

One Presbyterian denomination consists of only twenty-two church organizations with a total membership of only seven hundred and eighty-six; two other Presbyterian denominations have only one church organization each, with a membership in one denomination of four hundred and forty and in the other of only seventeen. A whole denomination of seventeen members! Five Presbyterian denominations have a membership of less than 10,000 each. Of the Methodist family six denominations have a membership of less than 10,000 each and four of less than 5,000 each. Six Baptist denominations have a

membership of less than 10,000 each: one of these has only seven hundred and eighty-one members, one only six hundred and eighty-five, and another two hundred and eighty-nine. Nine denominations among Lutherans have a membership of less than 10,000 each. These are the conditions which exist among the larger families; conditions among the smaller are even worse.

Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists have southern and northern branches with the same doctrines and polity. They separated over an issue that was settled almost a half century ago. It is very unfortunate for the cause of Christianity that brethren so closely related should remain separated for no better reasons than either can assign.

2. Present Divisions Indefensible

The present splintered condition of the Church is utterly indefensible. The Protestant Church is not divided over fundamental doctrines. If it were there would be some reason for the separation. We sometimes hear it said that denominations are so divided: that division makes it possible for each fundamental doctrine to receive proper emphasis. But we have considerably more than one hundred denominations; how many fundamental doctrines have we? Hardly a dozen; and no denomination has a monopoly of a single one of the number. There was the same need for a separate denomination for each of these in Jesus' day that there is to-day. But Jesus prayed for one Church. If one was enough then, one is enough now.

In the fundamentals Protestantism has always been agreed; this constitutes the unity of Protestantism which underlies its surface divisions. Division has always been over the non-essentials. The Church has divided over what it knew absolutely nothing about, matters of speculation; or over things of no practical importance to anybody. Our divisions have been over such things as our doctrines concerning the eternal decrees of God, or the number of times a man must be dipped in order to be baptized.

Some immersionists dip once in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They call that baptism. Others dip three times; once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. They call that baptism. This is the question over which they divided. Both admit that a man is no more certain of heaven whether he has been dipped once or three times; in fact both require that a man shall be a Christian before they will dip him at all.

It is the custom among the membership of certain denominations on certain occasions to wash one another's feet, following the example of Jesus washing the disciples' feet—and a most solemn and beautiful custom it is. In one denomination a brother washes the foot of another brother and then dries the foot himself. In another denomination while one brother washes the foot still another brother dries it. This is the question over which they divided. Neither regards the practice in either form as essential to salvation or Christian character.

Some years ago the Dunkers of Pennsylvania

divided. One party in the church insisted that it was wrong to wear double buttons, while the other insisted on its right to do so. As a result of that quarrel we have to-day a single button denomination and a double button denomination. Another church in this country divided over the right of a Christian to wear buttons at all, single or double. To-day one of these denominations wears buttons while the other wears hooks and eyes.

The reasons for the separation of the whole Protestant world are too closely akin to the things which we have enumerated to make it really comfortable for any of us. Think of a Presbyterian church separated from other Presbyterian churches because it sings psalms only, while other Presbyterians sing hymns and psalms. That is practically the only difference to-day between certain Presbyterians. We practice all these things in the name of religion and then wonder why the world is not converted!

A bare mention of the names of the Protestant churches without comment is probably the best argument for the indefensible character of our divisions. It thoroughly refutes the idea of a division over fundamental doctrines. One is simply bewildered to read them. Take the Baptist church. We have the following: Northern Baptist Convention; Southern Baptist Convention; National Baptist Convention; General Six Principle Baptists; Seventh-Day Baptists; Free Baptists; Freewill Baptists; General Baptists; Separate Baptists; United Baptists; Duck River and Kindred Associations of Baptists; Primitive Baptists; Coloured Primitive Bap-

tists in America; Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit-Predestinarian-Baptists; Freewill Baptists (Bullockites); and United American Freewill Baptists—sixteen in all.

The Methodist church offers us the following kinds: Methodist Episcopal; Union American Methodist Episcopal; African Methodist Episcopal; African Union Methodist Protestant; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Methodist Protestant; Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America; Methodist Episcopal, South; Congregational Methodist; New Congregational Methodist; Coloured Methodist Episcopal; Reformed Zion Union Apostolic; Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America; Free Methodist Church of North America; and the Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church;—fifteen in all.

The Presbyterians have been almost equally prolific; they number the following: Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; Cumberland Presbyterian; Coloured Cumberland Presbyterian; Welsh Calvinistic Methodist; United Presbyterian Church of North America; Presbyterian Church in the United States; Associate Synod of North America; Associate Reformed Synod of the South; Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America; Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod; Reformed Presbyterian Church; and the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States and Canada;—twelve in all.

Selected at random from other Protestant churches we read such names as the following: Church of

God (Adventists); Churches of God (Adventists); Churches of God in Christ Jesus; United Zion's Children; Church of God and Saints of Christ; Churches of God in North America; Apostolic Faith Movement; Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association; Pentecostal Union Church; Apostolic Christian Church; United Zion's Children; Heavenly Recruit Church; Church of Daniel's Band; Defenceless Mennonites; Nonsectarian Churches of Bible Faith; Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene; and many others, making a grand total of all Protestantism of one hundred and sixty-four. Surely there is no further need as one has said for "reforming the Reformation, protesting against Protestantism, purifying Puritanism, dissenting against dissent, and dividing, subdividing and re-dividing down to the inorganic dust of individuality itself."

"At a dinner table Mr. Huxley sat beside a lady who asked him whether he did not think it was a bad business that Rev. Mr. B—— should have adopted the eastward position in administering the sacrament. Mr. Huxley replied: 'My dear lady, I am told by Sir John Herschel that to drop a bean at the end of every mile of a voyage to the nearest fixed star would require a fleet of 10,000 ships, each of six hundred tons burden, all starting full of beans. Now do you really think that the maker of those fixed stars considers this new position of Mr. B——'s a serious matter?'

"The scientist might have inquired further if the great God who sends the sun whirling through space is pleased to see us hurling anathemas at each other

merely on matters of opinion. The God who holds Jupiter on his course likes to have the little folks given to Him and if some prefer to be baptized when they are older, He may not object very much. The great God who hurries a comet through the planets does not mind if some folks have bishops. He only says: 'See to it that they be good, and if you prefer presbyters, I will take them.' But probably the God who never to our knowledge puts two planets where they will interfere with each other, who always provides them elbow-room, may not like two churches to be put where one would be better." [1]

We sometimes hear it said that our churches represent different types of people and are therefore a wise provision. If so we ought to have a Tabernacle for the Skinflints and a Temple for the Dry-as-dusts. But we are not divided along any such lines. Every denomination in the land has within its membership and ministry every known type of people. There are more than one hundred denominations. How many types of people have we? There were as many different types of people in Jesus' day as we have to-day. He prayed for only one Church. If one was sufficient for His day it is sufficient to-day.

In a meeting in Nashville some years ago the Rev. Sam Jones turned to Dr. Witherspoon, a Presbyterian minister seated on the platform, and said, "Dr. Witherspoon, if your mother and my mother had swapped babies you would be a Methodist minister to-day and I would be a Presbyterian." He

[1] "Other Sheep I Have," Theodore Christian, note, pp. 60–61.

told the truth. And that suggests the chief reasons for our separations to-day. Our adherence to the various denominations is largely, almost entirely, a matter of birth and environment, a chance removal to a new neighbourhood, social strata or business relations. This accident of birth and environment we have erected into a virtue.

Social life and strata have vastly more to do with determining to what church people shall belong than creeds. Where there are two or more classes they generally imagine they require two or more churches. The result is a caste atmosphere in the church and nothing violates the fundamental principles of Christianity more. The Church of Jesus Christ is the only institution on earth that stands for the brotherhood of men. Fraternal orders preach and practice a brotherhood, but it is not the brotherhood of Christianity. Fraternal orders do a splendid work; they have their place; but a church that descends to the plane of fraternal orders has surrendered the most beautiful and valuable feature of Christianity. Fraternal orders practice brotherhood among their members. They seek for membership only the worthy, those only who can be of service to them. The Church of Jesus Christ gladly receives the most unworthy; the unworthy become the special objects of its ministry. And the Church is on trial to-day as to whether there is a real brotherhood in Christianity sufficient to break down the barriers of caste. The alienation and consequent separation of classes to-day threaten society. Shall the Church follow the principles of the Master in practicing brotherhood

among all men? As it is, Protestant churches are often made a stepping stone to social recognition. People often leave the church because they are not invited to tea or to other social functions among certain people. In the Catholic Church it is not so. And it is very unfortunate that such conditions exist among Protestants.

The sufficient answer to all argument for separate denominations is found in the simple fact that Jesus prayed for the unity of His Church; that was one of the things which lay nearest His heart:

"Holy Father, keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as we are. . . . Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me." [1]

Over and over Jesus repeats this petition, "That they may be one." There is no use trying to minimize the meaning of this prayer. Nothing short of the organic unity of His Church in which is found the highest unity of spirit and purpose can answer that prayer. Again let it be noted that Jesus couples the Christianization of the world with the

[1] John xvii. 11–23.

unity of His Church; "that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me." "What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

If the New Testament said not another word this alone would be sufficient; but this prayer of Jesus is not all. Jesus had other sheep which He would bring that there might be one flock and one Shepherd.[1] The immortal analogy of the apostle Paul requires the same unity for which Jesus prayed:

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit . . . God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honour to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof."[2] This can refer to the Church only. But it does not describe the modern Church.

Paul rebuked at once the spirit of division when it first appeared in the early Church: said he, "Each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?"[3] And

[1] John x. 16. [2] 1 Cor. xii. 12–27. [3] 1 Cor. i. 12–13.

there is not a line in the Bible to authorize or even encourage our divisions or any other divisions of the body of Christ.

3. Some Evils of Division

Waste in denominational machinery is a serious evil. Each one of the one hundred and more denominations among us must have its own set of ecclesiastical machinery, church boards, officers and offices. Each must have its own publishing houses with their business managers; its denominational papers and literature, with their editors; its colleges and theological seminaries with their buildings, grounds, equipment, faculties, officers and endowment. These all must be supported. As it is necessarily conducted it is a great waste both of men and money.

The situation among our Christian colleges is very unsatisfactory. There are entirely too many of them in the eastern and central parts of the United States. If we had a unified Church nobody would pretend that we needed so many. The West has very few, nothing like the number needed. Each denomination must have its colleges and they are often located without reference to other institutions. The result is that many are in too close proximity to others. Many are small, struggling and very poorly equipped. They can do only a poor grade of work.

There is no better example of waste than that found in our theological seminaries.[1] Economic

[1] See Appendix A.

waste in local work also is a great evil. In the language of one, "We pay too much for the luxury of being walled off from one another while we say our prayers." Our methods are wasteful not only in money but in men and efficiency. In the cities the principal churches are crowded together on a few prominent streets, while large areas of the city are unchurched. Churches vie with each other for what are termed strategic points, which means locations that make the best appeal to the well-to-do. The question of denominationalism in the location of a church is not how to render the best possible service to the cause of Christ; the question is not where is a church most needed; but what place will afford the advantage over one's neighbours. In order to keep up with the well-to-do, churches follow the drift of population to the choice residence districts, for fear somebody else will get their members; thus they often abandon the down-town districts.

Each pastor is required to cover a territory impossibly large. It often requires more time to make two pastoral visits in different parts of the city than it would to visit every family in a whole block. Territories overlap so that every street is covered more or less by several ministers. Necessarily many are overlooked and neglected in a field worked in such unsystematic fashion.

Smaller towns and the country almost everywhere are badly overchurched. In building up one church we often tear down another. We require a lot on which to build each house, and each must have in-

surance, heating, lighting, repairs, choirs, carpets and furnishings, stained glass windows, pastors and janitors.

Vinton, Iowa,[1] is a town of 3,300 population. It has a Roman Catholic church which serves about fifty people and a German church which serves about thirty-five who speak German. For the remaining 3,215 people there are five churches: Presbyterian, Methodist, Disciples, Baptist, and United Brethren. The United Brethren built their church within the last year. It is not necessary to say that it was not needed.

Washington, Iowa,[2] is a town of 4,380 people. There are about eighty negroes who have their own church. There is a Roman Catholic church with a Catholic population of some three hundred or more. This leaves a non-Catholic population of 4,000 or less. For these people the town has eight churches: Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, First United Presbyterian, Second United Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, and Associate Presbyterian. Five separate Presbyterian churches among a population of only 4,000 non-Catholic whites. Even the United Presbyterian church must be divided.

The Rev. E. Talmadge Root, of Providence, Rhode Island, an authority on the country church, is quoted as saying that upon a ratio of one Protestant church to every six hundred and seventeen Protestant people there is a surplus of two and one-half churches to a town in his state.

[1] See Appendix B. [2] See Appendix C.

The Massachusetts Federation of Churches[1] finds many overchurched fields. "Such is the condition in a large proportion of our smaller communities. . . . No less is consolidation needed in cities." In the second city of New England there are twice as many churches as the population requires. One whole county has a church to every two hundred and ninety-five inhabitants.

The Wisconsin Federation of Churches,[2] in the study of the country and towns with a population under 10,000, reports forty-six counties out of seventy-one in the state that are overchurched. One church to five hundred inhabitants is their basis.

The survey made by the Presbyterian church in Pennsylvania [3] indicates that in Center County in one section there were sixteen churches within a circle with a radius of three miles, and there were twenty-four churches within the radius of four miles. Several other churches were in close proximity, making in all twenty-nine churches in a sparsely-settled community. In another community of six hundred and sixty-two people, a section seven by three miles, there were eight churches; or one church to every eighty-three inhabitants. Three of these were about half a mile apart; and two of the eight were Methodist

[1] "The Consolidation of Churches: Why and How?" Bulletin No. 1, New Series, January, 1911.

[2] "Denominational Coöperation in Wisconsin."

[3] "A Rural Survey in Pennsylvania," Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Ph. D., Superintendent.

churches. But this community had consolidated its schools.

In the fifty-three communities in eight counties studied in Pennsylvania there was found one church to every three hundred and fifty-seven inhabitants. The Presbyterian rural survey in Illinois revealed one church to every five hundred and eleven population, and in Missouri one living Protestant church to every three hundred and nineteen non-Catholic inhabitants. The effect of this overchurching is seen in the size of the average church : the average country church in Missouri had fifty-three members, village churches seventy-one, and town churches two hundred and ten.[1]

The Federation of Churches in Nebraska has adopted the ratio of one church to every three hundred and thirty-three and one-third population, or major fraction thereof. Nebraska now has one church to every three hundred and twenty-two inhabitants, which means that there is little overchurching in Nebraska on the basis chosen.

Manifestly the Nebraska ratio is unsatisfactory. Even one church to five hundred population gives too many churches, except in sparsely settled communities. If we had only one great Protestant Church nobody would think so many necessary. If the basis of five hundred people is too small then the overchurched conditions are worse than reported. Such a basis is only a concession to our sectarian rivalries. It may be a necessary concession at the

[1] "A Rural Survey in Missouri," Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Ph. D., Superintendent.

present time, but that fact does not lessen the unsatisfactory character of such a basis.

And no evil of the situation is greater than the petty devices necessary to finance the stupendous undertaking. "The Church of Jesus Christ," says one, "has been transformed into a multitude of pauperized sects which rival each other in vulgar methods of raising money." Human ingenuity is taxed to its utmost to devise new schemes to coax unwilling quarters out of the people. It is an oyster supper, a raffle and a bazaar; "the cooking stove apostasy" is an absolute necessity of the undertaking. These things, if properly conducted, may have a place in church support under certain circumstances. If the women must support the Church, either in whole or in part, they have a right to earn the money by any honourable method. But few churches really need such methods. And the practice of these things as a rule fosters an erroneous idea of the Church and the proper method of its support. It is a question whether in the end more harm than good results. People need to be taught to give, or rather to pay what they owe. These things easily degenerate into very questionable practices. The well-to-do can offer no excuse for the use of such methods. A wealthy man who would require his daughter to leave school and sell peanuts and pop-corn in order to provide a new dress would earn the contempt of the community. But is not that parallelled to-day by the manner in which the women are often required to support the Church? Such devices by such people belittle the Church and

weaken its influence. The time spent in such work could be better employed in better things. Jesus Christ never intended His Church to be a beggar, depending for its support on persuading people to buy what they do not want. But that is what it often amounts to. And often things are sold at an exorbitant price, because it is the Church. The Church must be honest.

But suppers and bazaars are not the worst of the petty devices. In communities overchurched—and that includes nearly the whole country—men are often literally forced to contribute to a half-dozen different denominations, all trying to do the same thing, any one of which could do it better than all working together, working as they do. People are often importuned for money until they are disgusted; many instinctively feel that what they give is little better than wasted.

The situation may be illustrated by a little group of Christian people of a certain denomination in a small Western town, who built their church a year ago. They were not financially able to build. So they canvassed their own churches over the state for money. Their Church Erection Board assisted them. Their Christian Endeavour Societies over the state pledged $1,000 to the work. Then they canvassed members of all other churches in the town. The fact that others had a church of their own to support made no difference. Many were literally forced to contribute. The man soliciting gifts would visit a Presbyterian lawyer in company with one of the lawyer's clients; the lawyer could hardly decline.

He took a Methodist customer when he visited a Methodist merchant. In this way many men in the other churches of the town were literally forced to contribute to a new church which was not needed, and to which they did not want to give.

They were forced to dedicate with a large debt on the building which they value at $20,000. At the dedication there was present a faithful minister of this denomination who pledged one hundred dollars to this debt, to be paid in two years. He is a poor man, with a family to educate, and his salary was only six hundred dollars. This sacrifice of the real necessities of life for his family was not made to send the Gospel to this town; the town was already gospel-ridden. It is really pitiful to see good men so wedded to such a form of idolatry. Now, these people are not sinners above other denominations, either in building useless churches, or in their methods of raising money.

Division has been carried to such an extent that the membership of the average church is ridiculously small. For all Protestant denominations in the United States the average is only one hundred and four as reported by the government for 1906. Presbyterian churches had a membership average of one hundred and eighteen, Congregationalists averaged one hundred and twenty-three, Baptists averaged one hundred and four, and Methodists only eighty-nine.

In the Presbyterian Church, North, in 1911,[1] in the United States, over twenty per cent. of the churches had a membership of twenty-five or less.

[1] Minutes General Assembly Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., 1911.

Over five per cent. of churches had a membership of five or less. In the state of Illinois there were twenty-nine churches with a membership of five or less. Minnesota has three hundred and two Presbyterian churches: one hundred and ten have a membership of twenty-five or less, and forty-two of these have a membership of five or less. In Missouri there were twenty-five churches with a membership of three souls each, and in California there were seven churches with a membership of only one soul each! That is final perseverance of the saints, but not a very desirable variety. Doubtless these are the general conditions more or less everywhere and in all denominations.

Small churches where they are needed are all right; such churches often grow to be strong, and even if they do not, they render a service that is necessary. The trouble is not in the fact that so many churches are small; the trouble lies in this fact: these small churches, almost every one of them, exist under the shadow of churches of other denominations and stronger churches, and where the small churches can never hope to render any real service to the community. They grow like cabbages in the shade. The community is supplied without them, in fact better than with them.

These facts become still more significant when it is remembered that large amounts of missionary and church erection money are being used to build and maintain these worse than useless churches.

The writer has made a study by correspondence of home mission conditions in Iowa, in the Presbyterian

Church, North, for the statistical year reported to the Synod, October, 1910. In Iowa ten per cent. of the offering of the church for home missions is sent to the general Board in New York, and with the remainder the home mission work of the state is cared for by the Iowa Board.

According to the minutes of the Synod [1] eighty-two churches received aid during the year. Seven of these were situated in towns of more than 3,000 population, or in cities. They are not included in our study. The seventy-five remaining churches present some interesting facts.

The total membership of the seventy-five churches was 3,126, an average of forty-one and five-tenths each. They had lost fifty-six members in three years. The Board spent $9,935 [2] in their support. Of these seventy-five churches twenty-eight were situated where there was no other English church. These twenty-eight churches had a membership of six hundred and seventy-seven, an average of twenty-four each. They received from the Board $3,254. These churches are needed. Of these seventy-five churches forty-seven were located where there was one or more other English churches. They had a membership of 2,449, an average of fifty-two each. They received from the Board $6,680. Four of the forty-seven failed to report their rank; twelve

[1] See minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Synod of Iowa, 1910, pp. 559–562.

[2] Two Presbyteries reported to Synod for only six months. Their reports of expenses are doubled in order to make a complete exhibit of the Synod's year.

ranked first; and thirty-one ranked from second to fifth in their respective communities. That means that thirty-one out of the forty-seven churches, situated where there were other English churches, were situated where there were from one to four other and stronger English churches. Forty-five per cent. of the money spent on the seventy-five churches went to the support of these churches so located. The four churches failing to report rank may belong to this class also, and most of them doubtless do. The per centage spent on such churches then ought to be larger, probably fifty. But counting all the four churches not reporting rank as ranking first—and if a church had ranked first it would probably have reported that fact—and over thirty-seven per cent. of the home mission money expended in Iowa by the Presbyterian Church, North, goes to churches in villages and towns of less than 3,000 population where there are from one to four other and stronger English churches! Every dollar of this is wasted. These reports came from the churches themselves and it is not to be supposed that they underrated their own standing. In reporting rank, churches were asked to consider numerical strength, financial standing and general influence.

Twenty-two of the seventy-five churches had a membership each of twenty-five or less; their total membership was three hundred and forty-four, an average of fifteen and six-tenths. They cost the Board $2,319 for the year. Six of the twenty-two were situated where there was one or more other English churches and these six received $541.

One town in the state has a population of 1,200 with four churches: Methodist, Episcopal, Lutheran and Presbyterian. The Methodist church is strong. The Episcopal church with fifteen members receives six hundred dollars home mission money; the Presbyterian church with twenty members receives one hundred dollars. Seven hundred dollars of home mission money to support two rival churches with a total membership of thirty-five souls and both situated under the shadow of a strong Methodist church! The Presbyterian church had lost twenty-four members in three years. The Board of Church Erection had assisted it to the extent of nine hundred dollars. It had been aided by the Board of Missions for ten years, since its organization.[1] Numerous cases of the most flagrant waste of home missionary money in the state were found.

The Board of Missions is not to blame for this condition. It is only the logical and inevitable result of our sectarianism. The fault is in the system. These conditions exist more or less everywhere.

[1] Of the twenty-eight churches situated where there were no other English churches, ten had received aid from the church erection fund amounting to $5,025. None of it has been repaid. Eighteen received no such aid. Thirteen of the twenty-eight failed to report the length of time they had received aid; fifteen reported this item. Three had been aided for one year; one, three years; two, six years; one, eight years; three, ten years; one, twelve years; two, fifteen years; and two, thirty years.

Of the forty-seven churches situated where there was one or more other English churches, thirty-five had been aided by the Church Erection Board. Three had paid back their amounts in full, three in part. These churches now owe the Board of Church

But mission boards are creatures of the churches and stand ready to do their bidding. When the churches desire something better they will get it.

In Massachusetts the average aid given by home missions to towns with one church was found to be fifteen dollars, in towns with three churches one hundred and fifty-five dollars—more than ten times as much.[1] That represents the waste of division. Recently the state of Vermont was conservatively estimated to appropriate $8,000 per year, and New York State $25,000 per year, of home missionary money for the support of rival interests in church-burdened parishes.[2] Irving B. Wood reports a town of 1,300 population in Minnesota where there had been seven churches and three of them had received several hundreds of dollars of home missionary money and then died. One denomination had spent five hundred dollars a year to maintain a church of eleven members. In twenty-five years the home

Erection $20,022. Nine of the forty-seven failed to report how long they had received aid; thirty-eight report this item. Three had been aided for one year; one, two years; one, three years; two, four years; two, five years; two, six years; two, seven years; one, eight years; two, ten years; one, eleven years; two, twelve years; two, fourteen years; four, fifteen years; one, seventeen years; one, eighteen years; one, nineteen years; two, twenty years; two, twenty-two years; one, twenty-nine years; one, thirty years; one, thirty-five years; one, thirty-seven years; one, forty years; and one said "always."

[1] "Consolidation of Churches: How and Why?" Massachusetts Federation of Churches, Bulletin No. 1, New Series, January, 1911.

[2] "The Country Church and Social Service," George Frederick Wells, B. D.

missionary societies had spent $18,000 in that community to maintain four rival churches.[1]

In Colorado the Federal survey [2] revealed the fact that eleven and two-tenths per cent. of home missionary money used in the state went to places of no considerable size and where two or more denominations were aiding in the maintenance of rival churches. Many other such cases might be reported but these are sufficient to indicate the waste in home missions.

No war is made on the noble work of home missions. We believe in home missions, we believe in the work so much that we are unwilling to see money wasted in this way. One denomination is not worse in these respects than another, nor better. But it is time for a wide-spread and thoroughgoing revision of present methods.

Division means endless friction and wasteful competition. The Church and not the Kingdom is made fundamental and first, whereas Jesus put the Kingdom first. We are building churches at the expense of the Kingdom. Unchristian rivalries and jealousies abound. Bad feelings exist between many rivals in the smaller fields especially. There is even yet more or less proselyting and other questionable methods of taking advantage.

In this connection we quote an admirable confession of Dr. W. M. Brown, Bishop of Arkansas: "A

[1] "The Problem of the Country Church," *Northwestern Christian Advocate.*

[2] "Coöperative Advance in Home Missions." Federal Council of Churches.

very large proportion of the classes which the Bishops of the Episcopal church are confirming, is made up of Christians from other churches. Often the majority of a confirmation class is composed of such, and recently I had an experience which, notwithstanding my thoroughgoing sectarianism, made me heart-sick. I confirmed a class, all the members of which had been exemplary Christians, and some among them eminently so, of other religious bodies. . . . It is becoming increasingly more difficult for me to be reconciled to the fact that, while a large percentage of my confirmation classes are made up of proselytes from the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and other churches, fully fifty per cent. of the adult population of the United States are not faithful members of any church. The Good Shepherd rejoiced over the one sheep that He found in the wilderness more than over the ninety-nine which did not go astray; and I have come into the possession of that measure of His Spirit which leads me to prefer that, in making up their confirmation classes, the clergy should direct their special efforts towards the securing of non-church members. Not that I am unwilling to confirm ten times as many proselytes as I do, but that I want to confirm ten non-church members to one proselyte, and that I have come to regard a confirmation class which is wholly, or even chiefly made up of proselytes as an evidence of weakness rather than strength in the church, which should inspire regret instead of satisfaction. The rector who presented the class of proselytes to which I refer was greatly elated at his

valuable catches from the other churches, but, notwithstanding his enthusiasm, my heart was heavy because he had toiled all the year without catching anything from the great sea of the unchurched world."[1]

This lays bare the conditions that exist, not only in the Episcopal church, but among all denominations; and the dissatisfaction as expressed by Bishop Brown is shared by an already large and rapidly increasing number of Christian ministers and laymen everywhere.

Overlooking is an evil of division. The seriousness of our wastes becomes more evident when we remember the fields which are unsupplied with the Gospel. Many needy fields in the United States have not yet been entered by any church.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America formed a Joint Committee in 1909 which undertook an investigation of the actual conditions on the home mission field. They chose Colorado as a typical Western state. The findings of this committee were reported to the second annual meeting of the Executive Committee held in Washington January, 1911. This committee secured information of ninety per cent. of the entire state. Among other things they reported[2] one hundred and thirty-three places, with a population ranging from one hundred and fifty to one thousand souls, with not a Protestant church of any kind; and one hundred of these

[1] "The Level Plan for Church Union," pp. xvi.–xvii.

[2] "Coöperative Advance in Home Missions." Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 215 Fourth Ave., New York.

were without even a Roman Catholic church. In addition to these, there were four hundred and twenty-eight communities of sufficient importance to have a post-office, but without churches. Whole counties were inadequately supplied. San Miguel County, with over 5,000 people, had only three churches in the county; Lake County had four churches in Leadville which had 13,000 people; Las Animas County had eleven churches in Trinidad, where there were 14,000 people, but they found only four churches for the 16,000 people in all the rest of the county. Of sixty counties in the state at least eighteen were inadequately supplied. This committee concludes that if the same ratio of destitute communities to total population exists through all the eleven mountain and Pacific states, that there were more than 1,000 places of some importance that were destitute; and counting post-office neighbourhoods without churches there were over 4,000 destitute

At the same time certain towns in Colorado had more churches than were needed and more than could be supported. One town with a population of three hundred had six churches and was receiving five hundred and thirty dollars from the home missionary boards. Another town of four hundred population had four churches and was receiving six hundred and sixty dollars in mission money. These conditions are found more or less everywhere and among all denominations.

Bishop Anderson of Chicago is quoted as saying that there are forty towns in Illinois ranging from two hundred to eight hundred population without

any church.[1] In Wisconsin there are seven hundred and twenty-two squares (six miles square) that have no church of any kind. Langlade County is reported as an example of overlooking. Antigo is the only town in the county of over four hundred population; it has a population of 7,987 and is overchurched. Out of twenty-two squares in the county, nineteen reported no church. In the county there were twenty-two post-offices outside of Antigo and only five churches, or one church to every 1,818 people. Other counties were reported destitute but no figures were given.[2] Wherever surveys have been made the same general conditions of overlooking prevail.

Division degrades the Church to one of petty ideals. Its ideals are unbrotherly and violate the fundamental principles of Christianity. There is no more powerful influence on human character and conduct than ideals. They are the source of that divine discontent which ever strives to make improvement, social, economic, moral and spiritual. That discontent is the secret spring of action in all worthy human endeavour, therefore, the importance of the highest ideals. Two men work in stone. One builds a wall while the other chisels an Apollo. The difference is one of ideals.

The highest Christian ideals inspire to the noblest character and conduct. Christian men and women of the highest ideals are broad, generous, liberal, charitable, humble, tolerant, benevolent, truly

[1] "The Mad Rush for Souls," *Success Magazine*, February, 1911.
[2] "Denominational Coöperation in Wisconsin."

Christlike. Of course, such characters are to be found among the denominations, but they are found in proportion as the sectarian spirit in them has died, or never existed. In spite of denominationalism the Lord has always had a few faithful souls who never bowed the knee to Baal. It is this highest and noblest character of Christian that profoundly influences the world for good and so powerfully recommends Christianity. The narrow, uncharitable, bigoted sectarian has always been a millstone about the neck of real Christianity; and that character is the only logical and legitimate product of denominationalism. Petty ideals are inevitable in denominationalism everywhere. Especially is this true in the smaller towns, with from six to ten churches where one would be sufficient. They must each have small congregations and play a small part each in the life of the community. Instead of devoting themselves to the larger service of the cause and community each one vies with the other in efforts to outdo. If one puts down a new carpet, installs a new organ, buys new song books or paints anew the church, so must the others. And in some way those who are the chief rivals must be able to boast of having the best. Each of these little churches generally constitutes a little clique with the back of its hand to the rest of the world; each is intimate with its own membership and knows little about others. Petty ideals mean petty character, petty conduct, petty animosities, petty quarrels and petty treatment of the pastor. Little souls cannot hide their littleness.

Such churches are torn with internal jealousies and rivalries. They operate from the wrong motives. They quarrel over the choice of the minister, church affairs, the organ and the choir. They know they are Presbyterians, Methodists, or Baptists but they have less assurance that they are Christians. It is not maintained that in unity there would be no little, narrow and uncharitable characters. But such would cease to be the legitimate and logical product of our churches. What would then exist would grow up in spite of the Church. They would be few.

Sectarianism makes the Church an end in itself. Such churches exist for the purpose of multiplying their members, equipping and maintaining more or less elegant temples for the entertainment of their membership and sympathizing outsiders. Such churches are sepulchres of the crucified Christ.

The development of an inferior type of Christian is an evil of division. With its small ideals denominationalism has fed the people on husks and shells and they are naturally dyspeptic. In such facts is found the chief secret of the growth of Christian Science, Theosophy and the New Thought. "For my people have committed two evils," says Jeremiah. "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."[1] Hungry hearts are trying to satisfy that divine thirst which the Church is failing to satisfy and which sectarianism with its denominationalism can never satisfy. Decidedly the highest type of Christian to-day is found among

[1] Jer. ii. 13.

those who have lost their denominational and sectarian zeal. A prominent man not long since visited a large and wealthy church in one of our cities and found seventy people at the morning service. He asked why, and was answered: "The truth is we are such small Christians." We have put too many things on the penny basis. We have penny offerings at the Sunday-schools, penny church support, penny offerings to missions, penny prayer-meetings, penny church service, penny plans and penny visions; and as a result we have penny experiences.

With Jesus Christianity was a verb, and a transitive verb. We have made it a noun, the name of something to enjoy, "a Sabbath day's narcotic, a Sunday programme set to music and spaced off with a little prayer and a sermonette." Elements of the heroic have been largely left out. Now, a church must have something heroic in its purpose or it inevitably develops an inferior type of Christian. The early Church found the heroic in its missionary programme and its service to the poor; it grew rapidly both in numbers and in grace because it had a stupendous and worthy progamme, and every soul was busy. That is the secret of the wonderful growth and development of the Church in Korea to-day.

The modern church has little more to do than to maintain religious services on schedule time. But a Christian church in order to reach its highest development requires at least two things: a programme that is worthy of accomplishment and consecration to its programme. It is not sufficient to have a pro-

gramme, it must be one worthy of the Master. Sectarianism cannot furnish such a worthy programme.

The Church has been trying to persuade men to be good without telling them what they must be good for. Here is a reason why the Church ought to administer charity; it furnishes worthy Christian work to those who desire to exercise the Master's passion for blessing the bodies of men. The masses of the Church have nothing to do but to attend the services and pay for their support. This is one reason why more men have not been attracted to Christianity. The Men and Religion Forward Movement is trying to cure this very evil by organizing our churches for a service on broader lines, one that will provide work for all. But the one serious difficulty that stands in the way of the success of this movement is the divided condition of the Church.

This inferior type of Christianity has such small vitality that it does not bear transplanting very well. Christians remove from one community to another and often remain outside the vineyard. A Presbyterian removes to a community where there are eleven kinds of Presbyterianism, but he happens to belong to the twelfth kind, so he joins nobody. Unfortunately Presbyterians are not the only sinners of this class.

Sectarian rivalry is unworthy and unholy. Some tell us that it is a good thing, that it is a worthy stimulus. It is a stimulus. And in our judgment the only real reason why people ever defend it is because they practice it, and human nature naturally seeks to justify whatever it does. But sectarianism

curses society, politics, business and religion. Its blight may be seen everywhere. Sectarian rivalry may serve a purpose in the propagation of denominationalism but not in the propagation of Christianity. It never builds the kingdom of God. There is a higher and nobler stimulus, that of a vital union with Christ. Real Christian character ripens only in the sunshine of love. Without love there is no Christianity. There may be Methodism or Presbyterianism or other isms without love, and it often happens that loyalty to denomination does not go hand in hand with true Christian love. Paul exhorts us to cultivate the Christian graces, humility, meekness, patience and forbearance; but sectarianism cultivates the reverse. The Corinthians Paul dealt with as babes because their divisions rendered them carnal and worldly. Paul makes it plain that Christian development is marred by division and party feeling; and that the highest type of Christian cannot be developed without a loyalty to Christ that makes division impossible.

The whole organization of the Church is planned for edifying the body of Christ. To this end Christ "gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." [1]

[1] Eph. iv. 11–13.

Denominationalism defeats the highest development of the Christian. Nothing is more significant in this connection than the fact that Jesus connects with the unity of His Church the two fundamental purposes of the Church. These are the perfected character of the Christian and the evangelization and Christianization of the world. In that most memorable prayer recorded by John, Jesus prays: "And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me."[1] Whether these two things can ever be, depends on whether the prayer of Jesus can be answered. "Whoever studies this prayer must reach at least these two conclusions—first, that the best that the Gospel is capable of doing for man cannot be realized unless Christ's Church is one; and second, that the world's evangelization is impossible to any other than a unified Church."[2]

Ministers complain of the growth of pleasure-worship, materialism, agnosticism and the general indifference of the Church, when often the cause is the poverty of our programme and service. Denominationalism lives for itself too largely; it is fundamentally selfish and the larger Christian life cannot be developed in that atmosphere.

Protestantism speaks without authority as a re-

[1] John xvii. 22–23.

[2] "Denominationalism versus Christian Union," T. S. Hamlin, D. D., p. 61.

sult of our divisions. We need two kinds of authority, neither of which we now have nor can have without a unified Church.

We need the moral authority of a manifested unity. There is a fundamental unity of Protestantism to-day but the world does not see it. Our light is under a bushel; it ought to be on a candlestick. We need the living voice of a unified Church speaking in unmistakable terms. As it is, to the world outside we offer only a Babel of contentions. Above our united plea for the fundamentals of Christianity the world often hears only the "lo here, and lo there" of our message. In so large a part of our message we disagree and make the disagreement so apparently fundamental that the world is confused. The ignorant and often the intelligent stumble over it. The cause is injured with the outside world. Division puts too much emphasis on the relatively unimportant; the world sees the differences and not the underlying unity. We preach love, even the love of enemies, but we often refuse fellowship and cooperation with those working in the same great army with us. The world naturally discredits what we say.

We need an authority of unified administration and direction, the authority of order and convenience, the power to create such machinery and to exercise such oversight and direction as will give the highest possible efficiency to the work as a whole. A divided Protestantism can never have it.

Bishop Brown of Arkansas says: "If Christendom is to be unified it must have an official head, and I

am strongly inclined to think that the ultimate form of that headship must bear some outward, general resemblance to that of the Roman Church."[1] He proposes to recognize the essential equality of the churches, ancient, modern, Episcopal and non-Episcopal. He offers to allow each church to create its own denominational episcopate which will have equal authority with any other episcopate.

His are splendid suggestions and worthy of serious consideration. He concedes everything ever contended for by any Protestant church as to the authority of the "historic episcopate." When he says there must be a head somewhere he is right. What form that head shall take, whether bishop, council or committee, we are not prepared to say. But the evils which afflict Protestantism can never be cured without a wholesome authority of administration and direction. Needless duplication and waste must all be avoided; ministers must be employed, the churches must be supplied, needy fields must be entered. These things can never be done without systematic and concerted action and they imply a head.

The Church is making altogether too little progress. Division has weakened the forces and necessarily dissipates much of our energy. Instead of one great army of the Lord grandly moving forward to conquer the world for Christ, we have more than one hundred little detachments jealously watching and guarding each other.

The Church makes progress even in its divided condition, but when we consider the large Protestant

[1] "The Level Plan of Church Union," p. 198.

membership, the number of men and women consecrated to the service of the Master, the amount of money invested in Christian institutions and work, and the annual expenditure for the support of the Church at home, the progress is very small, compared with what we ought to expect, and it is very small compared with what it would be if we could eliminate the waste.

The net increase in membership to the Presbyterian Church, North, for 1911,[1] was only 15,457, the smallest reported net increase since 1899 and less than half for some of the years since then. That is an average net increase in membership of less than two per church for the whole year. Subtracting the

[1] According to Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., for the statistical year of 1911, the following facts are interesting in this connection:

Churches reported 10,051. Of this number 7,613 were served regularly by ministers; 2,167 were vacant. Thirty-six per cent. of the 10,051 churches, or 3,636, reported no additions on confession of faith, for the entire year. Of these 3,636 churches without additions on confession of faith, 1,271 had ministers. Of the 7,613 churches served by ministers, 5,924 had pastors full time and 1,689 only part of time. Of the 10,051 churches 4,116, or forty per cent., had a membership of fifty or less; 2,002, or twenty per cent., had a membership of twenty-five or less; and four hundred and ninety-nine, or five per cent., had a membership of ten or less.

Ministers reported 9,128. Of this number 2,685 are superannuated, clerical or idle. Only 3,909 were related to self-supporting churches.

Most of these facts are given and discussed in a paper by Rev. William Henry Roberts, D. D., on "The Scope of the Assembly Evangelistic Work." This paper was read at the Institute on Presbyterial Evangelism held at Atlantic City, New Jersey, February 27–28, 1912.

additions in the foreign field, that number is considerably reduced.

"At a meeting of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Reading, Pennsylvania, in March, 1910, Bishop Joseph F. Berry of Buffalo, an official visitor, made the astonishing remark that while that mighty denomination raised $49,000,000 during 1909, the increase in membership was only 65,000.

"'The investment was in entire disproportion to the results,' he said. 'Too much money was spent for such a meager return in souls. While I was informed that the reports of your district superintendents exhibited a substantial increase, the general gain amounted on the average to only two members a church. On the basis of expenditure it cost nearly seven hundred and fifty-four dollars to bring each soul into the fold.'"[1]

Other denominations are doing no better as will appear from the following: "Edgar Blake of Chicago, Associate Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Sunday-schools, Methodist Episcopal Church, made the following verified statement before the International Sunday-school Convention held in San Francisco, in June, 1911:

"'The evangelical churches of America are facing a serious situation. The six leading denominations showed a net increase of only 384,000 members in the year 1910. This represents the combined efforts of more than 160,000 churches, 17,000,000 church-members, and an expenditure of more than

[1] "Other Sheep I Have," Theodore Christian, note, p. 84.

$250,000,000. Each net gain of one represents the year's work of forty-four church-members and a cash outlay of more than six hundred and fifty dollars!'"[1] This is not the progress we ought to make.

Division has driven a very large part of the most vital Christianity of our day out of the Church, or forced it to operate independently of the Church. "The history of the Church in the nineteenth century," says one, "is less than ever before synonymous with the history of Christianity." Shall it become increasingly so? It must if division continues.

Many good men finding little or no field for their services in their churches, because of their littleness and narrowness, have engaged in religious, political, social or philanthropic work independent of the Church. And if they remain in the Church it is only nominally so.

The Salvation Army is an example. It has girdled the globe in a few years; it is carrying the Gospel where Jesus would carry it if He were here. It is singularly unfortunate when such movements can find no place inside the Church.

Charity is administered independently of the Church. Hundreds of fraternal orders and other philanthropic organizations supplement what the state does. The loss to the Church in allowing this work to be taken over by other hands is incalculable. We discuss this more at length later.

Large interdenominational and independent organizations for religious work abound; Bible Societies, Tract Societies, the Young Men's and Young

[1] "Other Sheep I Have," Theodore Christian, note, p. 259.

Women's Christian Associations, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and the American Sunday-school Union are examples. This interdenominational and independent work has kept division from being as disastrous as it otherwise would have been. No single denomination could possibly have supplied Bibles in the various languages and dialects required for missions. Some tried it and abandoned the project. While these and others that might be named do great good, they could do far greater good if they were all directed by a unified Church.

The larger social service of this country is almost entirely independent of the Church. Whence came our child labour laws? pure food laws? juvenile court laws? prison reform laws? These are all Christian to the core. Whence comes our advance legislation in general? The Church has made these things possible; but they have come chiefly from the Christianity that is operating independently of the Church. It cannot be denied that the Church is losing control of the forces of modern life.

The prophetic ideal was that "Out of Zion shall go forth the law."[1] Again, "The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."[2]

A Church exiled from man's deepest physical, social and political needs will never make the kingdoms of this world the kingdom of Christ. The

[1] Micah iv. 2. [2] Daniel vii. 27.

Church must work for the best interests of society, working for the best Christian laws, the best officers and the best possible execution of the laws.

Too many ministers are required to man the superfluous machinery of denominationalism. There is a shortage of ministers for sectarian purposes among us, but more than are needed in the service of the Lord. We have kept at home many who ought to have gone as foreign missionaries. We had in the United States in 1906 one Protestant minister for every one hundred and thirty-eight Protestant church-members, and one Protestant minister for every four hundred and seventy-eight non-Catholic population.[1] Some ministers are superannuated, some fill clerical positions, some are foreign missionaries and others are unemployed. Allowing twenty per cent. for these—and that allowance seems to be liberal—and we had one active Protestant pastor in the United States for every one hundred and seventy-three Protestant church-members, which is one for every five hundred and ninety-seven non-Catholic population. In the foreign field there is one missionary for every 275,000 population. This disparity is not very complimentary to our consecration to the Master. If we would unify our churches the number of ministers filling clerical positions would be so greatly reduced that ten per cent. of the whole would perhaps be sufficient allowance for the super-

[1] This calculation is based on the government's estimated population of 84,246,252 for 1906. A calculation based on the latest census and present number of ministers would make no material changes.

annuated, the clerical, the unoccupied and the missionaries. If one-fourth of our missionaries are women the remaining three-fourths constitute only a little over three per cent. of our ministers now. Then if we would distribute pastors so as to make each one responsible for a parish of eight hundred and fifty-six non-Catholic souls, we could spare 50,000 from the present supply of ministers. The decline of candidates has continued since 1906 and the condition now is no better than then. Making the same ten per cent. deduction from Catholic priests and on an average each priest in the United States in 1906 cared for 1,040 souls. Can a Protestant minister not care for eight hundred and fifty-six souls if a Roman Catholic priest can care for 1,040 ?

But think of the conditions which exist among us. With one active pastor for every one hundred and seventy-three church-members, which is one for every five hundred and ninety-seven non-Catholic population, there are thousands of pastorless churches among us, largely because there are not enough ministers to supply the extensive demands of division. There is a shortage in ministers in nearly every denomination in the country.

Some one may ask what could be done with the 50,000 ministers who would not be needed ? We are not saying that we have 50,000 more than we need. But we can spare 50,000 and be much better supplied than the Catholic Church. We can spare over 64,000 and supply the non-Catholic population of our country as well as the Roman Catholic population is supplied. Whether we have 50,000 too many we

cannot say; we do say that we have many more than we would need in a unified Church, and more than our just proportion, especially since the foreign field is so poorly provided. The large saving in money in a unified Church would provide salaries for many additional missionaries to the foreign field.

A division of labour among ministers is an impossibility in a divided Church. Each minister must attempt to do more than any one man can do successfully. Many of them must divide their energies between some form of business and the Church in order to supplement their meagre salaries. No man can do that and render the best service to the Church. Then, in the church he is expected to be the man of all work. He must be prophet, teacher, evangelist, pastor, financier, architect and musician; he must call on the fashionable, the poor and the sick, conduct the charities if there be any, the prayer-meeting, the young people's societies and often the Sunday-school and many other things. There is no possibility of being allowed to do only such things as one is best fitted to do.

Ministers are required to work at starvation wages. Small salaries are not due entirely to division but division is a prominent factor in the matter. This will appear when we remember that we had one active Protestant pastor in the United States in 1906 for every one hundred and seventy-three church-members. That means that on an average every one hundred and seventy-three church-members, with such aid as they can get from the outside, must support one pastor. When we deduct from

this number the children and youth, the poor and the deadweights and add to it the number of outsiders who contribute to the salary, we will have possibly not more than about one hundred people, who must pay the average salary. When we consider that contributions to church support are voluntary we are not so much surprised that the average is only six hundred and sixty-three dollars. It has been discovered in Massachusetts in the investigation of one hundred of the smaller towns that the average salary paid in towns with one church was eight hundred and seventy-four dollars; in towns of two churches six hundred and eighty-seven dollars; in towns of three churches four hundred and seventy-three dollars. This represents what sectarianism and consequent division cost ministers. It is wrong to ask such sacrifices on their part.

In general the situation is embarrassing. Christian ministers of certain denominations cannot even enter the pulpits of other denominations. They all read the same Bible, worship the same God, accept the same Saviour, and profess to walk in the same straight and narrow way; they are all trying to do the same work here; and hereafter they all expect the same heaven. And few of this day would claim that one had a better chance of heaven than the other. Such conduct cannot be understood by the world, or justified by the Church.

The foregoing is but a partial enumeration of the evils of division; but this ought to be sufficient to condemn it.

II

THE APPALLING SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY CHURCH

BECAUSE the welfare of the Church as a whole, in the future as in the past, is inseparably bound up with the prosperity of the country church, no discussion of the unity of Protestantism is satisfactory that does not consider, at least briefly, its problems. No more vital problem confronts the Church to-day than that presented by the Church in the country. This discussion will further illustrate the evils of division and necessarily repeat some things said previously.

1. Relation of the Country Church to the City

In 1800 less than four per cent. of the people in the United States lived in the cities, and by 1900 the proportion had grown to about one-third. The trend is still strongly towards the cities. We are told that fully seventy-five per cent. of the leaders of the business and religious world who now live in the cities were born and reared in the country. It is to the country that we must look for leadership in both business and religion for the future. "The cities cannot be relied upon to furnish the Christian leaders of the future. The work of the Church in

the country districts must be carried on with efficiency and power in order to insure the raising up of sufficient Christian forces to cultivate the city fields."[1]

2. The Utter Failure of Denominationalism

Man is a social being and in more primitive days the country church furnished very largely the means of gratifying the social instincts. It was then the centre of social life and as such it was a mighty factor for good. The country people attended the church in those days. The country church did more than answer the social needs of the people; it exercised a moral and religious leadership of the whole rural society to a far greater extent than it does to-day. But the church became stronger numerically and financially as wealth and population increased, and the need for coöperation ceased to be felt as much as formerly. The spirit of religious toleration and coöperation began to die as a feeling of self-sufficiency came over the people. Where union or other churches existed men began to withdraw and to form churches more sectarian. Then there followed an unholy rivalry which weakened the forces for righteousness and cost the church the good-will of many outside. And now the telephone, the press, made powerful by daily rural mails, and modern methods of travel, all put within reach of the masses because of increasing wealth

[1] "The Future Leadership of the Church," John R. Mott, M. A., p. 37.

and prosperity, have contributed their influence towards the transformation of country conditions. The people find other means for the gratification of both the religious and social natures. And the country church has ceased to fill its mission of supplying a need felt by the whole people; it no longer exercises its former leadership among the people. And unless it can be readjusted so as to enable it to fill such a need the country church is doomed.

The Rev. Henry Fairbanks, Ph. D., after a very extensive first-hand investigation of rural conditions, is quoted as saying:[1] "A majority of our people are never at church. Of those living two miles or more from church, only about one-third attend church. In the rural districts of New England and New York, from which the strongest men in the cities and West are coming, more than half the people are not only unreached but are absolutely unapproached by any direct Christian efforts."

The same article quotes President Hyde of Bowdoin College as saying within recent years: "New England to-day is confronted with the danger that the country village will be the first to lapse from vital Christianity; . . . that rusticity will again become synonymous with godlessness and superstition." Mr. Wells also reports that during 1905 he found, in one New England state, fifteen average rural towns, having a total of twenty-five churches, and the average church attendance was only thirteen and seven tenths per cent. of the town population.

[1] "What Our Country Churches Need," Rev. George Frederick Wells, *Methodist Review*, July, 1907.

He found that less than one-seventh of the people attended church regularly.

Irvin Brackett Wood reports[1] that sixty-two charges out of one hundred and thirty-six in the Minnesota conference of the Methodist Episcopal church have been constantly losing membership within recent years. They have 1,500 members fewer to-day than four years ago; and all but eight of these sixty-two churches are located in towns of less than 2,000 population. Forty-one churches in the Conference report 1,100 members less than they had seven years before and two hundred and thirty members less than seventeen years ago.

The Presbyterian Church, North, through its department of Church and Country Life has made within recent years three notable surveys[2] of country conditions; one in Illinois, one in Pennsylvania and one in Missouri. Representative sections of these states were chosen for the investigation. We are indebted to these reports for important facts.[3]

Wherever surveys have been made either by the Presbyterian church, church federations or by private individuals, the same generally appalling conditions have been found in the country and small

[1] "The Problem of the Village and Country Churches," *Northwestern Christian Advocate.* Reprinted in the *Expositor and Current Anecdotes*, August, 1911.

[2] These reports may be had of the Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Ph. D., Superintendent of the Department of Church and Country Life, 156 Fifth Ave., New York.

[3] See Appendix, Section D.

towns. "Holiness" and other fads are numerous. The country churches depend almost entirely on evangelism coupled with its emotionalism for the increase of membership. And the spirit of division is still rife in many places.

3. The Heart of the Country Difficulties

A study of the facts here given, and others not included, indicate that many factors have conspired to increase the perplexity of the country church problem.

Prosperity has had a profound influence. In many sections the unprecedented increase in land values has forced many farmers of moderate means to sell and remove to regions where land was cheaper. Many strong churches in this way have had their ranks thinned till little was left. Those coming in have often been identified with churches not represented in the community, or with none. Somehow in changing locations, whether city or country, many people drop out of church work altogether.

The country public school offers poor advantages compared with the towns; and the more prosperous farmers often rent their farms and remove to the nearest place where their children may have adequate educational advantages. Renters are often transient and generally add little to the religious forces of the community. And it appears that very little is done to reach the poor people of the country anywhere. The cities attract large numbers of the most sprightly young people be-

cause the country offers only meagre advantages in any direction.

The farmer is proverbially stingy in his support of the church. At home he raises nearly everything he eats and his clothing bill is often very small, because the cheaper grades of clothing only are required for farm work. A new suit used for Sunday only, lasts a long time. He needs comparatively few dollars a year to pay his bills at the various stores where he provides what he needs. He therefore concludes that his pastor needs but a very small salary in order to provide for himself and family in comfort. He forgets that he demands that his pastor and family shall be dressed better than the average farmer; and that the pastor must buy all he eats except a little that can be raised in a small garden. The pastor's bills must necessarily be correspondingly larger. The idea that the country pastor needs books and literature as a necessary preparation for his best work has dawned on but few farmers. So long as they feel no need of such things to assist themselves in farming they can see no reason why the minister should have them. The survey made in the three counties in Missouri indicates that the people there were contributing to church support only one-half of one per cent. of their incomes!

The result of this condition is that the country minister is incapable of doing his best work, and if he proves himself efficient he is called to a field that pays better. This condition is peculiarly trying to the country church, especially since there is a shortage of ministers in most of our denominations. The

weaker and less desirable churches are the chief sufferers from that situation. The average country minister does not want to stay in the country; and he goes elsewhere his first opportunity. The average country pastorate is shorter than elsewhere, and as would naturally be expected under all the circumstances, is served by the weaker men. There have been some notable exceptions, of course.

An interesting investigation involving six hundred and twenty-nine country ministers in nine different states outside of New England is reported by Rev. G. Frederick Wells.[1] This investigation revealed the fact that sixty per cent. of them were both college and seminary men. Seventy-five per cent. of these men were handicapped by inadequate financial support. More than eighty per cent. of these ministers placed denomination before church or religious interests; more than seventy per cent. placed church interests before community interests; and about the same per cent. placed community interests before larger world interests. Ninety per cent. of three hundred of these ministers were lacking in personal religious leadership and a majority of the remaining ministers were lacking in the same. These data were gathered from states as widely separated as New York, Ohio, Virginia, and Minnesota, and ought therefore to be representative.

What can the country church hope to accomplish with such a grade of ministers? But we would not be misunderstood. The full responsibility for the character of the country ministry cannot be charged

[1] "The Country Church," Rev. G. Frederick Wells.

up to the ministers themselves when from seventy-five to ninety per cent. of them are forced to live on salaries that are utterly inadequate. Under their limitations country ministers have done the best they could, and no class of men deserve more credit. What they need is fairer treatment and that is what we are pleading for.

The present educational requirements of some of our churches in a measure unfit ministers for the country pastorate. The minister who has the standard classical course of college and seminary does not generally like to live in the country. His tastes cannot be gratified there. He is only human. This may be seen in the fact that the Presbyterian church which has been most insistent on the highest standard of education for its ministry is not a country church. Its ministers have sought the towns and cities rather. Of course, the Presbyterian church has some country churches, but less in proportion than many others. The Methodist and Baptist churches, which have accepted a lower standard of qualification, are country churches as well as city churches. The remedy for this condition is not to be found in an ignorant ministry but in a change of the character of the education for the country minister.

The country and small towns are generally overchurched and as a result of this and the many other factors in the case the churches are often very weak. Most of them can provide services for only once a month, or twice at best; and this service is rendered by a non-resident minister. Little or no pastoral visitation is expected. The field is utterly uncul-

tivated. And pastors are changed so often that many churches are vacant for some considerable portion of the whole time.

The number of abandoned churches is perhaps less significant of the decadence of Christianity than might appear since the country is so badly overchurched. Many more ought to die and doubtless will. The large number of fields overlooked create a far more serious situation, especially in view of the fact that there is enough and to spare but for the wicked waste of sectarianism. The small per cent. of church attendance, even among church-members, is not so much an indication that Christianity is dying as that the Church offers little worth the trouble to attend. Where churches have died paganism has not been found. The small per cent. of growing churches in the country has its chief source in the failure of the Church to render a service for which there is felt a need. Even church-members who retain their sectarian principles have come to feel the Church's failure to render the service that satisfies a hungry heart. The rural free delivery with its daily paper, magazines and other literature, has put many country people out of sympathetic touch with the fundamental purpose of denominationalism, although many of them are not yet fully conscious of that fact. These things mean that denominationalism has failed, hopelessly failed, to solve the country problems. The people have lost their interest in the Church. But that is a very different thing from a loss of interest in Christianity. Christianity has not lost its interest. It suffers for

lack of proper expression. The Church is plodding along with antiquated methods. Where these have been changed and where the Church has come to render really valuable service in the general community betterment it is prospering. The city churches are more prosperous than the country churches because they have more nearly readjusted themselves to changed conditions.

III

THE ABSURDITY OF CREED-SUBSCRIPTION

THERE is no such thing as a religion without a creed; every Christian therefore has a creed. Life must find some form of expression and creeds are one of the forms for the expression of Christianity. We have no sympathy with the tendency to depreciate creeds. But it is not necessary in order to have a creed that it should be written; it may be oral. Some churches imagine they have no creed because they do not have a written one. Written creeds have occupied an important place in the history of Christianity and they continue to do so to-day. They will probably continue to do so as long as there is a Church.

1. A Legitimate Place for Creeds

Now, many things are good or bad according to the use made of them. This is true of creeds. It is possible to exalt them to a position which they should not occupy, to make a use of them for which they are not suited; and then they become a bane instead of a blessing. This has generally been done with creeds; and this is one of the causes of the growing disrespect for them. But the trouble is not with the creed, the creed is all right; the trouble is with the use made of them. There is a legitimate use for

creeds. They may serve many useful purposes. Educationally they ought to serve a valuable purpose. Sermons are necessarily fragmentary and no pastor can cover the whole ground of important theology within any reasonable time. This can be more satisfactorily done in a written creed. People can study it at their leisure. A systematic and comprehensive statement of the great doctrines of our holy religion is invaluable for convenience of reference and study.

Theology like everything else human—and theology is intensely human—changes from generation to generation. It is no finished product fitted in heaven and handed down to man, suited exactly to his needs. Perhaps God could have given us such a completed system, omitting no detail, if He had desired to do so. But He did not do so. A father might furnish his son as he enters school with a booklet containing all his mathematical problems worked out perfectly; but he would be a very unwise father. It is better for the boy to work out his own problems with only such assistance as enables him to do it. And it is better for us to work out our own systems of theology with the Lord's help than to have them bequeathed to us by our parents, our particular denomination, or even by the Lord Himself.

Theology, if it is vital, is a constant growth wrought out by each man as a product of his own experience and study. But it is valuable to him to know the experience which others have had and the results of their work. Men must think in the terms

of their age. The terms change from age to age; therefore, if a creed remains useful it must be revised occasionally. Many creeds have been revised and others are under discussion. Creeds are not infallible, therefore, the most recently revised creed is not final; it must be revised again and again.

But if our creeds are to render their highest service they must be used as testimonies to the truth and not as tests of discipleship or ability to serve; they must be used as platforms on which we stand and not as pens enclosing all the truth; they must be used as flags under which we fight and not as magazines of ammunition. These will be the uses of the creeds of the future.

Creeds have their abuses as we have indicated. At the head of the list stands creed-subscription. The laity in some churches are not required to subscribe to any form of creed. They are admitted into the church on the ground that they are Christian. To require any sort of creed-subscription as a condition of church-membership, unless the creed contain only what is required to make one a Christian, would be to require more for admission into the church than the Lord requires for admission into heaven. That would be an awkward situation. And yet as awkward as it is, certain churches, by an insistence on the observance of certain symbolic rites, the undue emphasis of certain emotional experiences and such like things, do require more for admission into the church than the Lord requires for admission into heaven. Some refuse to receive people without baptism; and yet they themselves admit

that the Lord would receive such unbaptized into heaven. If loyal to Jesus they are the Lord's children, the Lord has already received them, communes with them and will finally receive them into glory; but certain of the Lord's churches cannot receive them! It is time for the church to abolish such practices. As Charles M. Birrell said in Liverpool many years ago, "The Church of God below should be as broad as the Church of God above."

2. The Implications of Creed-Subscription

Subscription either to an oral or written creed is required of ministers and officers in perhaps all of our churches. Since they are to become teachers it is supposed to be necessary to have some standard of qualification for their work. In this the Church is correct. But it is supposed that this standard of qualification should cover more or less the whole wide field of theology; things essential and things admittedly non-essential. The practice of this character of creed-subscription is so old and well established that it may seem to some little less than sacrilegious to call it in question. But there is not a line of Biblical authority for it; and it has not justified itself in practice. If it cannot be justified on one or the other of these grounds, and it cannot, it ought to be abolished.

There is no objection to creed-subscription in itself; but creed-subscription as it is practiced among all denominations is objectionable. Men are required to accept creeds containing many things

which are not essential, either to salvation, character or service. Every denomination, whether it has a written creed or not, requires its ministers to accept some particular system of doctrines, Calvinistic or Arminian. Ministers in the Disciples and Baptist churches must among other things accept immersion; and in the Presbyterian and Methodist churches they must accept sprinkling and infant baptism. These things illustrate the situation. The objectionable character of the requirement, as practiced among us, ought to be apparent to every one who will stop to think what it implies:

In the first place, creed-subscription implies either that opinions on non-essentials are a legitimate test of one's ability to teach the essentials of Christianity; or that building denominations is more important than extending the kingdom of God.

Nobody would attempt for a moment to maintain the first proposition. And yet men are refused ordination unless they can accept the non-essential theology of their particular denomination. And why are they refused ordination? What is supposed to be a minister's primary function? Is it primarily to save men and to extend the kingdom of God? If so, since men are refused ordination whose opinions on non-essentials are not in keeping with denominational requirements, we can but conclude that opinions on non-essentials are considered a necessary equipment for teaching the essentials. But that is too absurd to be believed; in fact, nobody does believe it.

The second proposition violates the Master's injunction to put the kingdom before everything else. Putting denominations first can be justified on no ground except it be to insist on the identity of the denomination and the kingdom of God. Nobody does that. And yet as a matter of fact, unless a minister believes in the sprinkling of babies he cannot be trusted to call men to repentance in the Presbyterian church, or the Methodist church; and if he does believe in this he cannot be trusted to feed the lambs in the Baptist church. A Methodist in theology could not be ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian church; nor could a Presbyterian in theology be ordained in the Methodist church. Ministers may go from one of these churches to the other, or from any denomination to any other, but they must profess at least to have thoroughly renovated and disinfected their former theology in order to fit their new environment. Baptist associations would not accept Methodist or Presbyterian ministers; neither would Methodist conferences or Presbyterian presbyteries accept Baptist ministers, unless they professed a change of theology. The same is true with most if not all our churches. But ministers of most Protestant churches can work together in union meetings with the best of results; and generally either will admit that the other is just as loyal to Jesus Christ as himself. The whole community recognizes all of them as Christian gentlemen of the highest order; they so recognize one another. But one church will not receive ministers of the others without the necessary changes in

theology. The Almighty may be able to use a minister; He may add His divinest blessings to a minister's work; but creed-subscription makes it impossible for our churches to do so until he subscribes to a few shibboleths. When he does subscribe he is in no sense a better Christian or a more successful minister of the Gospel. He is only better fitted to build particular denominations. God is surely not honoured in such practices. Neither Presbyterians, Methodists nor Baptists could ordain Martin Luther to the ministry if he were living. He could not so much as be made an elder or deacon in the Presbyterian church. And yet he is the father of Protestantism. Spurgeon, Carey, Wesley and hosts of the best ministers the world ever had could find a place in but few of our denominations. And yet nobody doubts but that God most wonderfully used these men. What can be more absurd?

This condition of things implies that the minister's primary purpose is to propagate denominationalism. Unless he is equipped for that particular service, no matter how well equipped for the fundamental work of the kingdom of God, he is not wanted inside any denomination. That makes the first work of a minister to be a thing condemned by the New Testament in its every utterance and spirit. If denominationalism was not made of more importance than the kingdom of God it would seem that a man who is a Methodist, or a Baptist in theology might be ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian church, or in any other church, or received from the ministry of any church into any

other, if he was worthy and gave promise of usefulness.

Denominations may not be sufficiently logical to admit these conclusions, but one or the other of these conclusions is the only possible logic of the situation. The first is unbelievable; the second reduced to its simplest terms means that it is more important to make Methodists, Baptists or Presbyterians than to make Christians. That is a sad departure from New Testament ideals.

Just what advantage has any one denomination over another in any work of the Lord? Can anybody tell? Just what advantage has a Presbyterian over a Methodist, or over a Baptist, or over a Disciple, or over anybody else, in saving souls or in building them up after they have been saved? In ministering to the poor, the sick or the ignorant? Just what advantage has anybody else over a Presbyterian in these things? Is there a Methodist method of making Christians? Is there a Baptist method of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick? Is there a Presbyterian method of building character? or an Episcopal method of making ministers?

If a community is dominated by any one of our denominations just what can any other add that is worth anything in any work of the Lord? What denomination renders the divinest service to the world? Who produces the highest type of manhood and womanhood? Who exhibits the highest type of consecration to the Master? Who does most largely the things that lie nearest the Master's heart? The

noblest type of Christian manhood and womanhood, the highest type of consecration and service, cannot be produced where vital and essential elements of Christianity are lacking. If apostolic succession, baptism by immersion, close communion, the doctrine of apostasy, or final perseverance of the saints, the sprinkling of babies, or other doctrines that divide Protestantism were vital and essential, they would show by their presence or absence. Let us illustrate: Is repentance vital and essential to Christianity? We have a right to insist that it is until we see a type of Christian the equal of the best that has been produced without it. When men are made as pure, as clean, as consecrated and as godly without repentance as with it we must admit that repentance is not vital or essential. If that can be done it matters not whether anybody repents.

Now, Jesus gave us a test that may be applied to the Church: "by their fruits ye shall know them." The Presbyterian church produces as good fruit as any church on earth. You can find no nobler manhood or womanhood elsewhere, no higher type of consecration, and no better character of service to mankind. Presbyterians have no apostolic succession, no close communion; they rarely practice immersion; and never preach the doctrine of apostasy. Therefore these things are not vital or essential. The world has never excelled the Baptists in Christian character and consecration; therefore sprinkling has no special virtue. The same may be said of all the other matters that divide Protestantism. Nobody is the better or the worse for any of them. Then

what difference does it make what a man thinks on such subjects? In the service rendered to the world and in the fruit produced in individual and community life there is no discernible difference between our denominations. It seems that if a man is a loyal and consecrated Christian, a worthy and successful soul winner, that he ought to be received from any other church, or ordained to the work to which the Lord calls him in any church of the Lord. But creed-subscription forbids it.

In the second place, creed-subscription implies that repetition is an essential function of the minister; the repetition of a system of non-essential theology prepared by his church. The church claims the right to determine what he shall believe and commands him to repeat it to the multitudes. In the matter of his message the minister is made responsible to the church rather than to God; and that implies that he is first a servant of the church and secondarily a servant of God. This is true unless the church can establish its infallibility as God's representative on earth. But the Protestant Church makes no such claims. Protestantism occupies an awkward situation at this point; it repudiates the claims of Rome, but its creed-subscription is based on the same foundation.

The minister is a man before he is a minister. As such he has the rights of any other man. Does he surrender all his rights as a man the day he becomes a minister? The right to his own best interpretation of the Bible, the right to form and express his own honest convictions? We refuse to grant it. Ministers are not hand-organs for the grinding out

of the melodies prepared by any church, however delectable they might be. If preaching is to be simply a stereotyped repetition, then, as somebody has said, a phonograph will answer the purpose better. There will be no danger of unorthodoxy.

The minister is a prophet; a prophet is a man who has heard God speak to him, and who speaks the mind of God to the people. He is an expounder of his own creed and not that of another. Prophets are men with a message for their day; they constitute the advance guard of progress; but progress has too often been considered a prodigal son. Prophets' voices are always heard in the wilderness. The chief characteristic of the Christian life is its newness; and nowhere is newness more in evidence than in the life of God's prophets. We live under the new dispensation, we are made a new creation and walk in newness of life, and have the promise of a new heaven and a new earth. The prophet makes his contribution to the new forces that are to recreate the old world; and the true prophetic function cannot be exercised in anybody's straight-jacket.

In the third place, creed-subscription implies that substantial unanimity of theological thought, even in non-essentials, is possible and desirable. But such uniformity as creed-subscription would have has never yet been obtained, even within small circles. It might be had in a cemetery but not among living men. Many differences and great differences exist among the most creed-bound of our denominations; many differences that for prudential reasons are never mentioned except to bosom friends.

Creed-subscription seeks to impose a unanimity of thought that is not imposed in any other department of life. It is no more necessary to have it here than elsewhere. To think right is as difficult as to live right; and God will be as merciful to one honest failure as to the other. To think alike is impossible until God makes us all over. Men can no more be made to think alike than all musical instruments can be made to sound alike and for the same reason. But musical instruments can be so tuned that they will sound in unison. Unison in theology is all we need; and loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ will give unison in theology.

We understand, of course, that creed-subscription contemplates a certain liberty of thought within certain bounds. But the method of determining this liberty is one of the objections to the practice. The amount of this liberty is not determined by the creed, but by the personal opinion of the majority of certain ecclesiastical judicatories. Orthodoxy becomes a matter of geography rather than of theology; a matter of longitude and latitude rather than of learning. Certain presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church, North, will ordain men to the ministry today that other presbyteries would not ordain. One presbytery allows larger liberties than the other.

Recently the General Assembly of the church sent down to the presbyteries an overture providing a complete written record of the examination of candidates for the ministry, provided only one-fourth of the presbytery ask for it. This will enable the case, with the whole examination written, to be

brought on appeal before the higher courts. The majority could have made such a record before, but now one-fourth of the presbytery may require it. That action was taken because orthodoxy to-day in the Presbyterian church is a matter of geography; and men in one presbytery are not willing to trust their brethren in other presbyteries.

For this very reason the standard of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian church is not its creed; for its ministers are required to accept the "system of doctrine" only, as contained in the creed, and that with a large liberty of private opinion. The amount of this liberty is determined not by the creed, but by the personal opinion of the majority in the presbyteries and General Assembly. The standard of orthodoxy in reality in the Presbyterian church, therefore, is the personal opinion of the majority in these bodies. Now, one minister has as much right to his own opinion as another in any matter, and to be logical every minister ought to be a law unto himself. What is said of the standard of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian church is true in other churches. We imagine our creeds to be our standards but they are imaginary standards only; and they can never be more than imaginary standards while men are allowed a liberty of private judgment in accepting them; a liberty which is determined by the majority of some ecclesiastical body. Men can and do stretch the elastic materials of which creeds are made to cover all manner of things; and then they stretch their consciences to believe that it is right. If creed-subscription is necessary and wise let us make a

creed to which we can subscribe in every detail, or let the creed define the liberties granted; and then we will know exactly what we are doing; if we cannot do this, let us away with the whole thing.

Such unanimity of theological thought as creed-subscription contemplates is not only not possible but it is not desirable. If so God would have made us so that we might have had it. But God thought that a living and imperfect man was better than a perfect automaton. Variety is the spice of life. The music of an orchestra is better than the music of a single instrument, or of any number of the same kind of instruments.

In the fourth place, creed-subscription implies that the truth requires artificial support. Such a conception implies more faith in a creed supported by the artificial devices of men than in God's Word with all His promises behind it. Half truths and perverted truths require artificial protection. But the truth of Christianity is destined to conquer the whole world. Whether it is able to do so depends on whether it has sufficient vitality to take care of itself.

Scientists have provided no artificial support for their doctrines. Their announcements are often rejected at first but they are trusted to the world without the accompaniment of police powers. Yet the truth finally overcomes all obstacles and is accepted. That which proves untrue is discarded.

Jesus created no institution to stand guard over His truth. He preached it Himself in season and out of season and called others to assist Him in proclaim-

ing the good news. His truth was given to the world with a reckless abandon, as a flower breathes perfume, and without a doubt that it would finally win its way to the hearts of the people. He used none of the methods of the modern Church to reënforce His doctrines and compel orthodoxy. His faith in the inherent power of Christian truth is seen in every detail of His method.

Those whom He called to be His intimate companions and chief representatives were chosen from among the ignorant and despised. He published His truth among the poor and ignorant at a time when they were held in such contempt as we scarcely know. He neither used force, influence nor diplomacy to bolster His truth. Men of influence were His enemies. Nicodemus came at night. Jesus did not even formulate His doctrines into a creed; neither did He direct another to do it for Him. He called no organization into existence, though the Church grew out of His work. He founded no schools or colleges, provided no library and had no money; His truth was everywhere unwelcome; contrary to all the education and training of His nation and to every idea and prejudice of His people. He was fully conscious of the world's opposition. He was scoffed at, despised and hated. His own mother on one occasion at least thought Him insane; and His own brothers did not believe in Him. Yet He never had the least anxiety as to the power of His truth to take care of itself.

And His unwelcome truth has changed the whole current of human history. But it may be urged

that the success of His truth has been due to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit which made His truth effective. That is granted. And it ought to be remembered that the same Holy Spirit is still present in His Church and is as powerful to-day as at any previous time. If the truth did not need artificial aid in the more difficult beginnings of the kingdom it certainly needs none now.

It is pathetic to see a little fellow on one side of the Rock of Ages trying to overturn it, while on the other side are a lot of ministers alarmed for their lives for fear he will succeed. Such ministers must feel that their religion is built on a very unsafe foundation. God needed no help to keep the ark from falling; and He has promised that His Word shall not return void. If God is not preserving His truth and Church they will go down; if He is preserving them we need not fear. It is the minister's business to proclaim the truth everywhere and at all times. It is God's business to take care of it. Leave Him to do it.

A father on leaving home once said to his four-year-old boy, "Son, you must take good care of mother while I am gone." The little fellow agreed to do it. That night he prayed, "Lord, keep papa while he is away; I will take care of mother myself." Talk about keeping the power that keeps us! But is not that the object of creed-subscription?

In the fifth place, creed-subscription implies that it is an essential function of the Church to enforce a system of non-essential theology on its teachers. That implies the authority to discipline those who

fail to meet the theological requirements of each particular denomination: it implies not only the authority to do so but the wisdom of doing so. Since this matter is discussed at some length later under the subject of heresy trials, nothing need be said here.

3. Some Evils of Creed-Subscription

Now let us look into the practical workings of creed-subscription as it is practiced. It certainly hinders legitimate and necessary advance in knowledge. It renders Biblical and theological study practically useless. A minister subscribes to a creed and then spends much time in Biblical and theological study; but what is study worth to him? He has already subscribed to a creed which determines in advance what the results of his study shall be, what he shall believe. He has no choice in the matter and no right to depart from his creed; if he had such right there could be no right to try him for heresy.

Ministers have the liberty of study, of course; many would scout the idea that they did not have. And yet it is a liberty that is very unsatisfactory. This liberty as granted has two evils; it both mocks and enslaves. It bids a minister to look with his own eyes; and he would naturally suppose that he might be permitted to see what really existed, but not so; he is forbidden to see anything which denominational eyes have not seen with approval before. Now, no man nor set of men have the right to require of a loyal servant of Jesus Christ that he

shall be either Calvinistic or Arminian in his theology; that he shall accept immersion or sprinkling; or that he shall accept or reject any other doctrine which does not affect his loyalty to the Master.

Some years ago a Baptist minister teaching in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary of Louisville, Kentucky, discovered in the British museum some old documents previously overlooked which established the fact that at one time the English Baptist churches had practiced sprinkling instead of immersion. It was simply a matter of history that he had discovered. But he was denied the right to believe it; and was driven from his position for announcing his discovery. He had accepted an oral creed which determined in advance that he should not believe that Baptists ever sprinkled anybody. If trustworthy historical documents said so they were to be rejected; and if a minister departed from the traditions of his church because history required it he was no longer worthy to hold his position as a teacher of young men preparing for the ministry! Under such conditions study is worth little or nothing, unless one is searching for things to bolster his system of doctrines. If that is his motive in study the results are discredited before they are obtained. That sort of bias never yet found the truth and never will. This is the character of study that has done so much to discredit the ministry in the estimation of so many intelligent people.

If creed-subscription had succeeded in its purpose no creed would ever have been revised in any essential or important matter. And revision has always

been very difficult work. Somebody always suffers dearly before it is accomplished; somebody is cast out as unorthodox, humiliated and disgraced. Revision is finally made possible only because in the providence of God heretics become so numerous as to be in the majority and then they revise. That is exactly what happened in the Presbyterian church. Cumberland presbytery in Kentucky became a presbytery whose majority were heretics. They could not be disciplined by the presbytery because the heretics were in the majority; no other body had jurisdiction; so the Synod of Kentucky even unlawfully disbanded the presbytery and in that way turned the heretics out of the church. Heresy was the only serious difficulty in the case; every other difference could have been adjusted with ease if heresy had not been in the way. Now, the Cumberland Presbyterian church grew out of this heresy and made this heresy its distinguishing doctrine. But heretics of the same character continued to multiply in the Presbyterian church until they were in the majority; and then the Westminster Confession of Faith was revised. The two churches immediately reunited. That former heresy is now the key-note of nearly every sermon preached in the Presbyterian church. The mother is as proud of the one-time despised doctrine as the daughter, who, while a prodigal one hundred years ago, has been most royally welcomed home. In this case creed-subscription did not succeed, as it generally does not; but progress under such artificial weights is very difficult and always retarded. Why unneces-

sarily burden ourselves with anything that impedes legitimate progress?

Creed-subscription has always been the occasion of serious embarrassment to many of the most vigorous and valuable men in the ministry. Only one of four possible courses, and none of them satisfactory, is open to a minister bound by a creed, if he finds himself out of harmony with its teachings:

First, when in the providence of God a minister finds his theological position undergoing change, knowing the embarrassing situation likely to follow, he may be able to stultify his intellect and under the influence of prudential reasons he may persuade himself that his former position was correct. But it is an awkward position that requires one to violate, even under unconscious restraints, all the rules of evidence in order to hold his position.

Creed-subscription has most certainly vitiated the intellectual processes of many good men. In order to see this it is but necessary to read the pious jugglery to be found in the theological discussions and debates of creed-bound men in years gone by; the twisting, turning and dodging that was felt necessary in order to support some pet doctrine or set of doctrines. There can be no question as to the honesty and sincerity of the men who have engaged in such work; but it must be admitted that it is difficult to understand the intellectual processes by which much of such work has been done.

Second, if a minister cannot stultify his intellect he may skillfully conceal his real opinions, either by

preserving silence, or by deliberately deceiving the people. Fearing the consequences of a heresy trial or the ostracism of their brethren many ministers remain silent. They have undergone a change of opinion and they are afraid to tell it. They are too honest to deceive anybody deliberately about the matter. They would willingly suffer for what they believe to be the truth if they could but suffer alone. But they have families and they know not how to support them except in the ministry ; they are too old to turn to anything else now. Besides God is still calling them to preach and they dare not disobey. Their ideas have changed in spite of themselves. And who knows what the Lord may have whispered to the hearts of His servants who have changed their theology ? The history of the Church is written around the lives of men who had become unorthodox in their age. For such a minister to tell his change of ideas means to involve an innocent family and he often keeps still. But think what it means. Men of God called to preach the truth but who find it necessary, if they would retain an honourable place in their church, to have one set of opinions for themselves and another for the pulpit !

While some keep silent others sugar-coat their new doctrines and give them out to an unsuspecting public who have little or no idea of what they are receiving.

If there is any man on earth who ought to be honest and unfettered it is the minister of the Gospel. If he ceases to hold old-time views let him tell us so ;

let him be honest enough to preach what he believes. Then let the Church be generous and tolerant enough to treat him as a brother. If he is wrong kind treatment may win him back again. Any condition that breeds such difficulties ought to be abolished. In this respect the Church is like a family. A father who deals harshly with his sons will find that they will lie about their petty misdeeds, or preserve a silence that is not wholesome. It is better to treat the boys so that they will confess their wrongs knowing that they will find sympathy at home. The same is true in dealing with ministers. Self-preservation is the first law of nature; and when ministers come to feel the injustice of being treated as heretics are treated, they are very likely to feel justified in doing something that is, at least, unwholesome.

Third, if a minister cannot stultify his reason and is unwilling to conceal his real opinions he may withdraw from his church. Many people insist that this is the only honourable course. But we do not believe it. It is not the function of the Church to call ministers. God alone does that work. Ministers derive their authority, if they have any, from God and not from the Church. The Church has only the symbols of authority and it can convey no more than it possesses. The Church is the Church of Jesus Christ and so long as He whispers to a soul to stay where he is it is not the duty of anybody to say nay. Jesus and the apostles continued in the Jewish Church although out of harmony with its doctrinal position. They did not walk out nor did they

counsel others to do so under similar circumstances. Luther did not leave the Catholic Church nor did Wesley leave the Anglican. Had the world never had ministers out of harmony with the churches the Church would probably have died. That is one of the Lord's means of keeping the gates of hades from prevailing against it.

If every minister who had changed his doctrinal position had withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church, North, the Westminster Confession of Faith would have remained in need of revision; and the Presbyterian church to-day would be as dead as the hard-shell Baptist church and about as small numerically. That is exactly what happened to that Baptist church. Those who had changed their theology went out and formed a missionary church, while the non-progressives held the old church and died. The same results would always follow.

The separation of the liberal and conservative elements in church life is always unfortunate. The Church needs a quality of caution that it may be duly restrained; the conservatives furnish it. But the conservatives need a courage to spur them on; and the liberals furnish that. Each needs the other; they are complementary elements. If they are separated the liberal becomes too liberal; and the conservative becomes too conservative. And when they are separated they come to look upon each other as enemies and not as brethren. Often their best energies are wasted in fighting each other instead of uniting them in a common cause.

The Church has wasted entirely too much energy

in trying to weed out heresy. There always has been, is now, and always will be more or less error in the Church, and yet the truth prevails in the end. We are not to expect the ideal in the Church. We are still in the world and the millennium is not yet in sight. The separation of the good and bad will take place at the end. Creed-subscription never yet made a really useful man orthodox; time-servers only are made orthodox by such methods. A vigorous manhood consecrated to God is orthodox or unorthodox regardless of creed or heresy hunters.

Fourth, if the minister cannot stultify his intellect, if he will not skillfully conceal his real opinion, and if he is unwilling to leave his church, he may remain where he is till he is silenced or put out. But we discuss heresy trials at some length in the next chapter and nothing needs to be said on that subject here. It would seem that the absurdities and evil fruits of creed-subscription as it is practiced were sufficient to condemn it.

IV

THE ABUSE OF ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

THERE is no question of more importance in connection with the unity of Protestantism than the question of ecclesiastical authority. It was the exercise of an intolerable tyranny of authority that divided the Church; and it is the question of authority chiefly that stands in the way of reunion. Jesus committed the Keys of the kingdom to Peter and to His Church. What authority did they confer? This has been a very troublesome question. Whatever the Power of the Keys may include, we do not believe that it gives to the Church any authority of discipline, such as has been exercised more or less throughout its history, and such as is exercised to-day. The whole system of public and official penalties provided for offending church-members we believe to be false in principle and pernicious in practice. Private discipline, admonitions, personal warnings and pastoral attentions are legitimate and a necessary part of the work in restoring the erring and fallen.

1. Character of the Church of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ came to establish a kingdom; this kingdom was to be spiritual. Human estimates and

values He reversed. The type of member He required was that of a little child; the standard of greatness was that of service. The highest good of the participants in this kingdom, according to the beatitudes, was to be found inside and not outside; it was internal and not external; and it consisted in poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, being merciful, heart purity, peacemaking, and enduring persecution. His kingdom was to be universal as to time and men; its object being the universal brotherhood of man and the highest good of its membership.

The Church of Jesus Christ was intended as the chief agency in the establishment of this kingdom. It was to be a divine institution, with a divine foundation, divine guidance, protection and power; against which the gates of hades could not prevail.

One chief difficulty under which the Church of today labours is its conception of itself, its ideals and its functions. The popular conception regards the Church as an exclusive institution or organization, analogous to that of the state, with its regular government, laws and penalties; where obedience is obtained, when necessary, by forms of coercion. The dogmas of creeds and confessions constitute the bonds of union. But the Church of Jesus Christ bears no resemblance to this idea; it was a family, with God as a common Father, its bond of union was that of a spiritual kinship, cemented by an affection, where obedience was obtained by personal and fraternal admonitions, counsel and persuasion. Its

membership were "brethren," "sons of God," "children of God," and they constituted "the household of faith." Here and there they met together frequently in affectionate family groups for "fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers." Their relationship was closer than that of friendship, race or blood. For a time they had all things common; for they sold their possessions and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet for the common use of the family.

In His efforts to conquer the world for Himself Jesus deliberately rejected all forms of force as defeating their very purpose in His work; for they that took the sword, according to Him, should perish by the sword.[1] And in consistency He could not have conferred an authority on His disciples or created a duty among them which would inevitably provoke and cultivate the very passions and propensities of human nature which He sought to subdue. Therefore He provided no machinery in His Church, nor commissioned others to do it for Him, for the exercise of penal authority by any set over another. And He provided no artificial support for the preservation of the truth.

For His conduct in keeping with this fundamental principle of His work, which declined the use of all force, Jesus was rejected by the nation. Human nature found it difficult to understand the wisdom and even possibility of dispensing with a thing so long in use, and so agreeable to itself in exercise. Human nature has the same difficulty yet. And when Jesus professed to be a King and then declined

[1] Matt. xxvi. 52.

to use the weapons of force which belonged to kings the people rejected Him. He not only declined to use force in subduing His enemies and in crushing opposition, but He declined to use it also in the government of His Church.

The Church of Jesus Christ was called into existence therefore as a family, as a brotherhood of the new life, "as a fellowship of sympathy and upward striving."[1] All classes were freely admitted into His society on the simple evidence of the spirit of a new life; this was trusted to produce Christlike conduct. Their only law was the great law of love. In the application of that law Jesus adds three injunctions[2] which evidently He meant to be fundamental features of the new life. They were first, to minister to the needy; second, to make disciples; and third, to forgive all manner of offenses. No punishments were provided for the enforcement of any feature of their law; any machinery that could have been devised would have been too clumsy for so delicate a task. And yet He expected His "net" to catch every possible kind, both good and bad.

He delivered His disciples from a microscopic legalism, from the keeping of petty rules, and instead of their constraint He supplied a motive. The power that governed in His society was to be internal and not external. And the morality of His followers became an active instead of a passive morality. Such was the character of His Church.

[1] "A Valid Religion for the Times," Parley W. Womer, p. 169.
[2] "Ecce Homo," p. 208.

2. Jesus' Provision for Moral Delinquency and His Attitude Towards Unorthodoxy

Jesus knew that His disciples in their weakness would often be guilty of wrong-doing, and that many unworthy would find a place within His Church where they would cause more or less trouble; therefore, He made provision for such contingencies. Let us look into His teachings on this subject.

In the case of personal offenses He gives the following direction: "If thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."[1] In these words Jesus directs the offended or injured party first to try conciliation: "Go, show him his fault between thee and him alone." If this fails he is directed to try arbitration: "Take with thee one or two more." If this fails he is directed to appeal to a larger assistance: "Tell it unto the Church." This appeal to the Church was not for the purpose of a modern church trial, but it was an appeal for help based on the hope that a larger number of peacemakers might be able, if possible, to reëstablish fraternal relations between the men. If this fails non-intercourse is prescribed: "Let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." The Jew had nothing to do with the

[1] Matt. xviii. 15–17.

Gentile or the publican. There is here no approach to the modern church trial; the purpose of the whole proceeding is to persuade the wrong-doer to do right and, having failed, to leave him to himself. In such a case it would be the only sensible course. This is better than constant friction. Such is the law of Jesus for personal offenses.

Now let us consider the matter of public offenses. Jesus never practiced any form of public discipline for moral delinquency while He was here nor directed others to do it then or later. Judas was not disciplined, and yet he was known to be a bad man; neither was Peter who cursed and denied his Master. John in a burst of temper would call down fire on the inhospitable Samaritans, but no discipline followed. Jesus preached non-resistance in His work and consistently practiced it Himself throughout His life. It is the next thing to the impossible to make people believe that such a course is wise because it violates the training of a lifetime, and denies gratification to the animal instincts. In the parable of the tares Jesus said of the admixture of good and evil in the Church, "Let both grow together until the harvest." And He gives a most satisfactory reason: "lest haply while you gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them." This has been found too often to be true. The separation of the good and the bad is the prerogative of the Judgment; and Christ's Church has not been entrusted with the prerogatives of the Judgment. The separation of the good and the bad is not to take place till the end. This is clearly taught in Jesus' explanation of the parable of the

tares: "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."[1] The same thing is taught in the parable of the drag net: "When it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away. So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous."[2]

Now, in the parable of the drag net it was impossible to separate the good and bad before the net was drawn up on the beach; it was probably not possible to know what was good and what was bad till then. But in the parable of the tares it is quite different. The tares were bad people in the Church and their character was recognized; there was no longer doubt as to their character. But Jesus declined to have them removed. In answer to a question covering that point He said, "Nay; lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest."[3]

Jesus also said, "Resist not him that is evil."[4] And again, "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned."[5] And again, "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in

[1] Matt. xiii. 40–42. [2] Matt. xiii. 48–49. [3] Matt. xiii. 29–30.
[4] Matt. v. 39. [5] Luke vi. 36–37.

thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." [1]

These parables and other Scriptures are so simple, it would seem that their meaning ought to be obvious to every one. Now, shall we bend these Scriptures to fit what we think the Power of the Keys ought to contain, or shall we interpret the Power of the Keys, which is admittedly of difficult interpretation, to fit the requirements of these simpler and plainer Scriptures? One or the other must be done. And it seems to us that the parable of the tares especially cannot be interpreted to allow modern church discipline without an unwarranted perversion of the plainest possible words. It also seems to us that the Power of the Keys may be interpreted to exclude the power of public discipline.

Many other sayings of Jesus have a bearing on this subject. He represented Himself as a king who kept open house and who surrounded his table with "the poor and maimed and blind and lame." He constrained beggars from the highway to come in.[2]

And we cannot imagine Him casting out from this table any who desired to remain. With Jesus separations were to come at the Judgment. If a man smite us on one cheek we are exhorted to offer also the other.[3] If any man hate us we must do him

[1] Matt. vii. 3–5. [2] Luke xiv. 16–24. [3] Luke vi. 29.

good ; if he curse us we must bless him ; if he despitefully use and persecute us we must pray for him.[1] We must forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven ;[2] and they who take the sword may expect to perish by its use.[3]

It is not necessary to insist on a literal interpretation of all these sayings ; it is sufficient to get their spirit. What does their spirit require ? Does it authorize or even encourage the idea that any part of the followers of Jesus, who are themselves sinners and fallible, may inflict punishment on their brethren ? To ask the question, it seems to us, is to answer it.

It is impossible to escape the fact that discipline as practiced in the Church is punishment. It matters not what the theory of discipline may be. The Church inflicts only what it terms moral and spiritual penalties ; they are censure, rebuke, suspension, deposition and excommunication. These sentences when public and official are in essence the same as civil and corporal penalties ; their differences are one of degree and not of kind. The fact that an ecclesiastical court inflicts the penalty does not change its nature. Church discipline which is public and official is punishment ; and it is not the amount or character of the punishment that is wrong, it is the principle. Jesus has undertaken to conquer the world, and His only instruments in that work are the Spirit of God and the power of the truth. He nowhere authorizes His Church to inflict punishment either great or small.

[1] Luke vi. 27–28. Matt. v. 44. [2] Matt. xviii. 22.
[3] Matt. xxvi. 52.

The whole practice of punishment among men was born of the impulse of retaliation. It came from and is perpetuated by the animal that is within us. It matters not what theory we invent to justify it. The theory of discipline is that it purifies the Church and reclaims the offender. But its nature is not altered by disowning its origin by cleverly and perhaps unconsciously devised theories to justify its practice. Lex talionis was originally the basis of all state punishment and acknowledged as such. But as we have become more and more civilized we have invented other theories to justify in state what we continued instinctively to do. It is not unnatural that we should do the same in Church.

Believing that the truth was able to take care of itself Jesus nowhere authorizes discipline for unsoundness in doctrine; nothing He ever said can be twisted into such usage. On the other hand much that He said is clearly indicative of His broadly tolerant spirit in such matters. "Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you,"[1] spoken by Jesus to His disciples when they reported that they had forbidden a certain man to cast out demons in His name, is especially significant. This person was certainly irregular and doubtless unorthodox, but Jesus rebuked His disciples for their attitude towards him. It was sufficient for Him that the man cast out demons. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold"[2] breathes the same tolerance. And Jesus deliberately chooses an unorthodox Samaritan and makes him a model for orthodox Jews.

[1] Luke ix. 50. [2] John x. 16.

The selection of the Samaritan was not accidental, and would have been impossible by one who believed in the discipline of the unorthodox.

There are movements of Providence which in the Church are constantly separating the unworthy from the worthy, or rather which lead the unworthy to separate themselves. This has been more or less true in every age, but especially so in the Christian dispensation. John said concerning Jesus, "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner."[1] With the same providential dealings in mind Jesus Himself said, "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away."[2] "For judgment came I into this world,"[3] said He concerning His own mission among men.

Jesus by His preaching separated the unworthy. He offered nothing attractive to men from the standpoint of the world. When He saw that many people fundamentally misunderstood Him and followed because of their misapprehension He preached a most puzzling sermon on the bread of life. This sermon winnowed the chaff from the wheat. Preaching the ideals of Jesus has always been a winnowing process. Jesus promised no earthly rewards; He did promise His followers persecution. He required sacrifice even unto death if necessary. Too often the Church has sought to bribe men with sweetmeats. The sort of life to which Jesus called His followers was not the easy and delightful thing which Christianity in more modern times has been

[1] Matt. iii. 12. [2] John xv. 2. [3] John ix. 39.

supposed to be. The parable of the sower[1] illustrates this separation of Providence. Some have no root in themselves and endure but a short time; tribulation and persecution soon send them where they belong. Others are choked out by thorns—the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. Events so shaped themselves that Judas finally showed the world his real character, and he then went and hanged himself. This work will finally be completed when the Son of Man sends His angels to finish the task.

If ministers to-day preached more faithfully the Christianity of Jesus the Church would have far less unworthy among its membership. When Christianity loses its moral antagonism it loses its moral power. While the terms of membership in the Church should be reduced to the minimum, its ideal requirements should be held to the maximum. But no man should ever leave the Church except of his own deliberate choice, and Jesus never intended that any man should leave it otherwise.

We have now examined the nature of Christ's Church, His provision for personal and public offenses, the general tenor and spirit of His teachings, and in all these we find no authority for modern church discipline in matters of morals. We find not a line to teach the right to discipline for unsoundness in doctrine, but on the other hand we find enough to indicate that Jesus could have had no possible sympathy with an intolerant orthodoxy. But we do find that Providence has ordained a

[1] Matt. xiii. 3-23.

method of getting rid of the unworthy even in this life, but its machinery has not been committed to the Church. The Power of the Keys needs reinterpretation.

3. The Church's Misapprehension of the Master's Teachings

The ideal of Jesus was soon lost and the brotherhood of sympathy which He left was soon transformed into an authoritative ecclesiastical institution with its creeds, disciplines, and machinery for purification and propagandism. Then began the darkest chapter in the history of our Christian civilization. This parting of the ways came long before the union of Church and state. A more or less rigorous discipline was early exercised, but previous to Constantine church discipline rested on purely moral sanctions; but when the Church and state were united ecclesiastical offenses began to be punished as offenses against the state. Temporal punishments, such as confiscation of property, exile, imprisonment and death became common. Heretics soon came to be deprived of all public offices; to be denied the right of public worship; the right of receiving and bequeathing property and of making binding contracts. The horrors which were enacted by the Church in the name of Christianity for long centuries are sickening in the extreme. They are too familiar to require more than mention. It was really not until the eighteenth century that there came a radical change of views concerning religious toleration.

While the Reformers pleaded for religious liberty it was only for a liberty for themselves. When they came to have the power they persecuted with the same unrelenting cruelty that had characterized the Catholic Church. The Protestant Church continued religious intolerance and persecution, even unto death, long after the Reformation. With Calvin's approval the practice was introduced by church and state into Geneva. The persecution of the Anabaptists was terrible; there was only one centre of Protestantism where they were not persecuted and that was Strasburg. Edward VI burned women. Puritans were put to death under Elizabeth. And the same intolerance and persecution were practiced in the American colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Quakers were executed in Boston and supposed witches in Salem. So little for long centuries did the Church know concerning the spirit of the Master.

4. Discipline Derived From the Retributive Functions of the State

It is not difficult to understand why such practices have been approved by the Church. Men have long thought it possible to cure all manner of evil with some form of punishment, inflicted either for its retributive or deterrent influences. That has been the theory of all nations and throughout all the ages. It is far from dead yet. And it is the most natural thing in the world that the same principles of punishment underlying governmental administration should find their way into the Church; if they were

wise in state as they were supposed to be, why not wise in the Church? It is not surprising to find the Church administering punishment on the same principles as the state, at least so long as punishment is supposed to be so nearly a panacea for all manner of ills. The growing disuse of church discipline is coincident with and due to the world's loss of faith in punishment as a cure.

Punishment has been found to be ineffective for governmental purposes. Capital punishment was once frightfully common and was inflicted for minor offenses. But it has little place in the modern world. Crime has been found to have three causes: the individual and personal causes, the inherent character; the physical causes, the wind and the weather, cold and hot; and the social causes, environment. The social causes of crime have been found to be by far the most prolific. Now, punishment, retributive or deterrent, can touch only one cause of crime, the individual and personal, and only the weaker forces among these; because the more powerful and hereditary influences and tendencies are beyond the control of such means. That means that punishment can do little if any good in the correction and cure of crime. This the world has found to be true. And as a result of its findings the legislative bodies of our country are revising their systems of criminal jurisprudence, slowly, it is true, but surely, in a direction that will make the system regenerative rather than punitive.

Now punishment as such has failed in the state, and we believe that it is worth as little in restrain-

ing and restoring the wrong-doer and the unorthodox in the Church. It must fail because it cannot reach the cause. It did fail throughout the centuries when it was used so generously and vigorously. Had it been worth anything it should have worked wonders during the middle ages. Could excommunication have purified the Church not one pestilential falsity would have remained through the ages past. But this very spirit of intolerance and exclusion, more than anything else, has contributed to the corruption of the Church. The principle is as evil to-day as it was in the past.

The Protestant Church has long since abandoned the idea of civil and corporal punishments for ecclesiastical offenses. It contents itself with what it terms the moral and the spiritual; but, as we have already seen, the public and official acts of an ecclesiastical court are the same in principle as civil and corporal punishments.

5. The Impracticability of Discipline in Matters of Morals

Church discipline as a public and official action involves a trial. Its penalties publicly brand the offender and become millstones about his neck, which serve to drive him deeper into wrong-doing. Of course, in theory all discipline has for its object the reclamation and salvation of the offender, but it is a miserable failure in its purpose. Punishment is destructive: its effect is to break down. If it could be proved that there had been in the past an occasional case where punishment did an offender

good, the Church cannot know when it is dealing with such a case. Men are not divinely inspired in such matters. And the inevitable abuses and evils which attend its administration more than counterbalance any little good that conceivably might be accomplished now and then. We do not believe that any good ever results from it. The possibility of evil is so great in such cases that Jesus, it seems, advises omitting all attempts in that direction. To punish in order to restore is the same thing as to bleed a patient in order to strengthen him. Punishment is the shorter method, the quicker method of dealing with offenders; but is it not also the cowardly and lazy method? It would doubtless often require much long and hard work to restore a fallen brother, but he can be disciplined and thereby disposed of in short order. Is not the Church thereby shirking a sacred duty?

In rooting up tares wheat is rooted up with them and inevitably so. For this we have the Master's word. Church trials plunge the Church into deadly controversies. No man liveth to himself and no man suffers in a church trial to himself. Even good Christian people are often unable to see the necessity for any sort of punishment on the part of the state for crimes committed by loved ones, and much less can they see a reason why the Church should discipline them. Not infrequently churches have been rent by acts of discipline. In this way churches have often lost valuable members who as a result never find their way back into the Church; and the weak may be discouraged and led to give up entirely.

The practice is fraught with great dangers to the innocent. Because of this fact Jesus advises, "Let both grow together until the harvest."

In church discipline it is impossible to treat all classes alike. Churches cannot afford to take a course which is suicidal. "Remonstrances and reproofs," Vinet is quoted as saying, "which are a part of pastoral discipline, are much more easily dispensed to the poor and the weak than to the rich and great." This is true with every form of discipline. Churches in the administration of discipline have learned to their sorrow how true this is. To favour the rich and the great in such matters is to furnish the enemies of religion an occasion for speaking evil of the Church; and it serves to alienate the poor and the weak.

And churches generally have ceased to exercise their former discipline. We rarely hear of a church trial except in case of ministers. It is hardly possible that such would be the case if the practice had been found satisfactory and helpful. If it is a good thing it ought to be put into universal practice; if not it ought to be abolished.

Discipline inevitably breeds Pharisaism. Some people are negatively good; outwardly no charge can be made against them; but they are destitute of the spirit of Jesus Christ. Others really Christian are very narrow and unsympathetic; and such people are often insistent on discipline for the pleasure it gives them. They are doubtless often unconscious of their chief motive in the matter. With the best men human nature is weak and nowhere

does its weakness show quicker or to greater disadvantage to the cause of Christianity than in the exercise of authority. It is beyond question that the churches which have had the most authority of government have suffered most from petty politics, jealousies, and general internal difficulties. History ought to teach us something, and it would seem that if we can learn any lesson from history in this particular, it must be that the less exercise of authority the better.

The very nature of the Church forbids attempts at discipline, such as are still practiced. The Church is a hospital where even the physicians and nurses are only convalescent. Think of a hospital filled with patients, some with tuberculosis, some with fever, some with cancer and some with dropsy; where the patient afflicted with dropsy insists on putting the fever patient out, and the tuberculosis patient insists on putting the cancer patient out. Is that not what happens in cases of church discipline as it is practiced? We are all sinners and God alone knows who is the worst. The heart is desperately wicked; one cannot fully know his own.

The exercise of any form of external authority at best can compel outward obedience only; but Christianity requires an inward obedience. The authority to discipline can never enforce that; if it can the Gospel might be propagated more successfully with the sword than by moral suasion. But no authority can command love, loyalty or obedience. The state can imprison men and even take their lives, but both punishments are powerless to reach the heart. So-

called moral and spiritual penalties in the Church are equally powerless for purposes of the Gospel. Love can do a thousand times more than force in any form.

Are not the best Christian men utterly incompetent as judges of their brethren in such matters? They cannot measure guilt because they can know little or nothing concerning the heart of an offender; and they can know as little of the influences of heredity and environment. Some men who fall have fought a better fight than many who never fell; and will not God reward the honest effort, even if it comes short of success? Should one sinner sit in judgment on another sinner when the Lord only can tell who is the worse?

It is well to remember that there are two kinds of sins in the Church; respectable and disgraceful. Respectable sins[1] abound in the Church: they are the sins of envy, jealousy, ill-will, want of charity, selfishness, neglect of duty; the sins of place, custom and power; the sins of business and society. Do not these abound among those who even stand highest in the Church? And who can say that he is entirely free from them? There are also sins that are disgraceful: lying, stealing, drunkenness, adultery, murder and such like. Men condone one and despise the other; but are they all not one in essence? Hate is murder and lust is adultery. It is not the show of sin that makes it base; it is its interior quality. The only good many have is nega-

[1] "Respectable Sins," in "Sermons for the New Life," Horace Bushnell, second edition, pp. 326–345.

tive. Now, shall one class of sinners discipline another class? Which class shall exercise this authority?

Respectable sins are certainly far more hopeless of cure than the disgraceful; like some diseases they are insidious. It is almost impossible to make even the worst type of such sinner believe that he is a sinner. The covetous and uncharitable can scarcely be reached. Did not Jesus have the profoundest contempt for the sanctimonious and cultivated sinner of His day, and a boundless compassion for the disreputable? Nobody was denounced like the Pharisees who thanked God that they were not like other men, adulterers and extortioners. The scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites all observed the conventional rules of decency; theirs were sins common in polite society. What were their sins? Were they not want of love, selfishness and pride? The rich man Jesus damned for his want of charity and love; he was in high favour. For all the record indicates he might have been a dignitary in the Church. The man whose ground brought forth plentifully was in good repute and worldly wise; his trouble was selfishness. He knew no use for a dollar except to hoard it for selfish purposes. The priest and the Levite enjoyed the profoundest respect of their fellow men; they were condemned for want of love; but did not Jesus commend the unorthodox Samaritan because he had it? The issues of the Judgment[1] are to turn on the possession or the want of a love that serves humanity. Those who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit

[1] Matt. xxv. 31–46.

the sick and the prisoner enter into eternal life; while those who do not are condemned to eternal punishment. Respectable sins only are mentioned in the Judgment; many things that ministers rail against are so little compared with the want of charity that they are not once mentioned in this connection. The compassion of Jesus for the disreputable sinner knew no bounds. There is nothing more beautiful and more characteristic of Jesus in the New Testament than His treatment of the woman taken in adultery. The first convert of the cross was a thief; and the first recorded promise of pardon was to a harlot. Saul the persecutor was made into Paul the apostle.

Think of the dignified and genteel sinners in the Church, the miserly and covetous, those who harbour unchristian tempers and lack love; think of such men, or any other set of sinners—and are not the best Christians only sinners under medication?—think of such men sitting in judgment on their brethren in the name of Him who said, "Judge not," and solemnly passing a sentence of condemnation in the name of Him who said, "Condemn not." If the Church followed the injunction of the Master, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone,"[1] such would be impossible. And it should be remembered that this reply of Jesus was in response to a question concerning church discipline. Men zealous for respectability and the forms of religion, but destitute of its essential spirit; covetous men, enjoying every luxury within sight of the

[1] John viii. 7.

misery and within hearing of the cries of the poor Lazaruses who have always been with us, but who feel no compassion, men whose prototypes are those of the priest and Levite and the rich man who fared sumptuously every day, abound in the modern Church. They have always been in the Church in goodly numbers. And a church trial can scarcely be enacted without their prominent participation. But is it not outrageous that such men should be permitted to inflict punishment on other members of the Church? And yet it is impossible to prevent it in any form of public and official discipline.

The most godly men in the Church are always deeply conscious of their guilty distance from their divine Lord and Master. Is it befitting that they should inflict any sort of punishment on their brethren, who, after all, may have been more sinned against than sinning? Is not the very spirit that would inflict discipline in the Church the same spirit that Jesus condemned when He warned His disciples against attempting to cast motes out of the eyes of their brethren?

One object of discipline is the purification of the Church, the correction or removal of that which is deemed most liable to work harm to the cause of religion. If the Church has been charged with this duty, it seems to us that it ought to inflict its discipline on the respectable rather than on the disgraceful sinner. If it would correct or remove that which is most harmful it would do so. As it is the Church as a rule deals only with the more offensive and repulsive forms of sin, those things

which society has put under its ban. Now, sins that are repulsive are far less dangerous than the respectable; on that account they work less harm to the cause of Christ. Drunkenness, adultery, lying and such like are so repulsive that they serve rather as a warning to those who look upon them. People turn from such in disgust. But respectable sins are, on account of their respectability, often charming and fascinating with the pleasures they offer. Church discipline is directed against the wrong set, if its purpose is the correction and removal of that which is most dangerous. As a matter of fact church discipline does not tend to purify the Church; it creates factions, provokes unchristian tempers and thereby creates more evil than it remedies. Zeal for the purity of the Church is commendable; but it is misdirected in a church trial.

The Church has no satisfactory guide to direct it in its discipline. It must depend on its most enlightened judgment in such matters; and one set of men often impose their conscience on another set. Among the various churches there is the widest possible difference of judgment as to what is allowable and what is not. How shall the matter be decided? An appeal to the Bible brings no relief. Men differ honestly and sincerely in their interpretation and understanding of the Bible. It by no means solves all our problems.

A thing may be sinful for either of two reasons; it may be so inherently, or it may be sinful because of its consequences. Some things are inherently sinful; murder, lying, stealing and such like; but there

are many things which are wrong only in their effects or consequences. On no other grounds can anybody condemn cards, drinking, dancing, secret orders, or rebates. The Bible has no texts that condemn these things. The Bible says nothing against slavery; many good men once defended slavery with the Bible. The Bible says nothing about counterfeiting government money, signing other people's names to checks, cutting public telephone wires, distilling liquor without a government license, watering capital stock, or milk offered for sale. Are these things wrong? God has left us to solve such problems ourselves.

For our assistance in the work He has given us the Bible and promised us His Spirit as a guide. The Bible gives us two things: the spirit of Christ in which to solve our problems; and the fundamental principles of morals and Christianity. But we must apply these principles in the spirit of the Master and with such assistance as the Holy Spirit gives. Anything is wrong that violates the spirit of Jesus, or the fundamental principles of morality and Christianity.

But naturally enough men differ in their understanding of this spirit, in their applications of these principles and consequently in their solution of life's problems. One says cards and dancing are wrong; another denies that either is wrong. The same differences occur in many other matters. Necessarily many mistakes are made. But is it not better honestly to work out one's own problems and get them wrong than to have another work them out for him and get them correct? The chief good to the

individual is not in the correct solution of his problems—that is very important, however—but the chief good is rather in the discipline which an honest effort gives. The fact that God has not made it possible for us infallibly to solve all moral problems, and the further fact that the responsibility for solution, in a very large part at least, is thrown on the individual himself, would indicate the superiority of the discipline over solution. The George Junior Republic is an example. The boys make their own laws and enforce them. They make some mistakes but they learn to be men and that is the fundamental purpose of the Republic. If laws were imposed on them from the outside it would rob the Republic of its glory. Therefore, should not all such matters be left to the individual conscience?

Does not the right of discipline for matters of morals open the door for endless and inevitable abuses of authority and violations of the personal rights of others? Churches have frequently intruded upon civil and personal rights and social and domestic relations. The Reformed Presbyterians interfere with men's civil duties; United Presbyterians and some others decline to allow their members to belong to secret orders. Methodists and others have interfered with amusements and domestic affairs. When a church feels itself in duty bound to discipline its members for matters of morals how shall it know where to stop? Where shall the line be drawn between that which is subject to discipline and that which is not? Men are not agreed on moral subjects and never will be.

Take such matters as divorce, Sabbath observance and temperance. The best Christian people differ honestly and widely concerning these matters. We are not agreed on divorce. Some churches allow divorce for adultery only; others allow divorce for adultery and desertion. And they are equally intelligent and they are equally honest in their interpretation of the Scriptures. "The Westminster Confession contains a chapter on marriage and divorce. More than one minister has been suspended or deposed for marriage to a deceased wife's sister; and yet the supposed prohibition in Levitical law is a misinterpretation; and even if it were a Levitical law, Levitical marriage laws are no more binding on the Church of Christ than the Levitical prohibitions of wearing mixtures of wool and linen, or plowing with an ox and an ass harnessed together."[1] Most Protestant denominations have removed the restriction; Anglican bishops, however, still oppose such marriages. The Puritan idea of the Sabbath cannot be enforced on all Christians; neither can total abstinence. But individual churches have enforced such ideas on their membership.

Dr. C. A. Briggs calls attention to the Chicago-Lambeth Declaration of Unity in this connection: "The Chicago-Lambeth Declaration of Unity does not reserve to the reunited Church any right of jurisdiction in matters of morals. Is it proposed that matters of morals shall be outside of the sphere of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or that these matters shall

[1] "Church Unity," Rev. C. A. Briggs, D.D., p. 192.

belong to the jurisdiction of the lower judicatories? It certainly cannot be designed that all matters of morals shall be regarded as outside the range of ecclesiastical jurisdiction on the one hand, or, on the other, that the jurisdiction of the supreme judicatory shall be unlimited in these matters . . . but I think that they were quite right. Morals are not for the decision of the supreme judicatory, but for the lower judicatories."[1] Dr. Briggs, with the Chicago-Lambeth Declaration, would deny jurisdiction in morals to the supreme judicatory of a reunited Church.

But why allow jurisdiction in matters of morals to the lower courts only? Can the higher courts not be trusted in such matters as well as the lower courts? Why not give such authority to the highest court of a reunited Church, if any court has such authority? But Dr. Briggs has good reasons for denying such authority to the highest court of a reunited Church; and the same reasons for denying such authority to the highest judicatory, we believe, will deny it to every other judicatory.

Dr. Briggs proposes to leave the whole question of morals to the lower courts in a reunited Church, manifestly because he feels the injustice of one set of men imposing their consciences on another set. Suppose such matters are left to the lower courts, to the lowest court, to the individual church? If the majority are Puritan they may impose the Puritan Sabbath on their membership; the majority may impose their ideas of divorce and drink on the mem-

[1] "Church Unity," p. 191.

bership; and discipline those who do not submit to their requirements. But would not the individual whose conscience had been violated by the lower court be injured as much as if it had been done by a higher court? How has the injured been helped? How has the situation been improved? Is not the evil in the case the exercise of such authority by any court, high or low? Dr. Briggs admits the evils of all discipline by any church court when he says: "Ecclesiastical decisions in morals tend to legalism, and legalism to a Pharisaism which is essentially anti-Christian." [1] If so why give any church such authority?

The Church has long laboured under a false impression, it appears to us, as to the effect of the immoral among its membership. The immoral do not injure the Church by their membership in it; as well say that the sick injure the hospital. The membership of such people might injure a social club of select folk; they might injure an ecclesiastical aristocracy; but the Church of Christ is neither a select club nor an ecclesiastical aristocracy. And immoral men inside the Church are no greater injury to the cause of Christ than they would be outside; the Church's teachings to the contrary need revision. Has not the Church injured its own influence by insisting publicly that only the good ought to be in it? The world at least takes it at its word, measures it by its own standards, and seeing the many weak Christians in the fold not unnaturally decides that the Church is composed mostly of hypocrites. It would

[1] "Church Unity," p. 193.

be better to teach the world as did Jesus that the "net" catches every kind, and that the "wheat" and "tares" are expected to grow together till the harvest. That seems to be the normal condition of the Church.

Then what shall be done with the immoral in the Church? Let the apostle Paul answer: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted."[1] According to this the purpose of the Church is to save all offenders. Admonitions, personal warnings and attentions and pastoral visits are proper; but punishment is out of the question. Josiah Strong most admirably states the function of the Church. "The state," says he, "exercises authority; the Church exerts influence. The state commands, compels, and punishes; the Church instructs, exhorts, and reproves."[2] But its reproofs need not be public official acts which brand wrong-doers.

But shall the known immoral be retained as office bearers? Men whose immorality is known will not desire to continue their official functions, unless it be after repentance and confession. Christian love can solve all such problems without the exercise of the ordinary methods of discipline. A more serious difficulty than that of a known immoral man exercising his official functions, it seems to us, is that of the Pharisaic officer who is even worse, but against whom no church can find grounds to lodge a complaint. The Church now gets along with the Phari-

[1] Gal. vi. 1. [2] "The Church and Reform," Josiah Strong.

see; it ought to be able to get along somehow with one more hopeful of salvation. We believe it can.

Shall the immoral minister be tolerated? Well, Judas was tolerated. He stole from the bag and Jesus knew it. Peter denied his Master, cursed and swore, but he was not disciplined. Within a very few days following his fall Peter was the leading spokesman in a meeting where three thousand souls were converted. It is a good thing for Peter and the cause of Christ that he did not belong to some modern denomination, for he would have been silenced for at least six months "for the good of the cause." Paul and Barnabas quarrelled; so bitter was the quarrel that they separated. But no church took it up. Peter dissembled at Corinth but no penalty followed, except Paul's rebuke. If a minister has fallen he will most probably repent. If God forgives him and can use him, the Church ought to be able to forgive him. If any church wants his services he might be allowed to serve them. If ministers could be sure of a more whole-souled Christian sympathy in the Church when they did wrong, they would more often confess their wrongs to the Church. But knowing the usual harshness of their treatment they often feel justified in denying their guilt to the end when in the wrong. Self-preservation is the first law of nature. Ministers, therefore, knowing that forgiveness will never be granted, often decline to confess.

The need of our day is a Church that dares to follow Jesus. He received sinners, ate with them, fellowshipped with them, and allowed the sinful

women with alabaster boxes to render their humble services. He erected no "moral quarantine station" and left none for His Church. If anybody ought to be excluded from the Church it would seem to be the Pharisees who thanked God that they were so much better than other people. A regenerated Church has never existed and we have never been encouraged to expect such a Church; but it ought to be possible to have a regenerating Church. That is the supreme need of to-day. If sinners are to be cured superior advantages for that needed work ought to be found inside the hospital erected for that purpose.

"We must change the Church from a gallery of fine arts to an asylum; for the weak-minded in faith, for those who have fallen in moral weakness, for frail sinning men and women, for the sick, the lame, the halt, the blind. The deeper the need, the warmer and closer must be the fellowship." "It is answered that such a Church would invite criticism. So it would. The Pharisees would say, 'This Church eateth with publicans and sinners.' We must take our choice between Christ and His critics."[1]

6. Some Evils of Heresy Trials

The history of heresy trials is one reeking with unchristian elements. It has furnished the enemies of Christianity with one of their most powerful weapons. Out of it grew the horrors of the inquisi-

[1] "Conditions and Tests of Fellowship in the Christian Church," Rev. Charles S. McFarland, Ph. D., *Homiletic Review*, August, 1908, pp. 100-104.

tion. We are aware that the fact that a thing has been abused, even horribly, or that it is liable to be abused, is no satisfactory argument against a legitimate use. But discipline in the Church is not a thing that may be abused, as all good things may be; its flagrant abuse is inevitable in the present state of human nature.

The history of the long-drawn-out and bitter fight between science and theology ought to have taught us a few things by this time. It ought to have made plain the relation between theology and Christianity long ago. The attitude of the Church in the past towards scientific investigation and advance has been very unfortunate. It is true that the Church has often been greatly provoked by its enemies who have frequently attempted to overturn Christianity itself with the new scientific ideas. But through all those years has not the Church fought a losing battle? Any business method which had been found as disastrous to the financial world as heresy trials have been found to be to the Church would be abolished at once by the unanimous voice of business men everywhere.

The heliocentric theory of the planetary system seriously disturbed the Church at one time; and was supposed to be subversive of Christianity. The persecution of Galileo is too familiar to more than mention. Even Luther, Calvin and Wesley opposed the new science. Then came the law of gravitation which seemed at first to dethrone God Himself. Many bitter battles were fought over these two ideas; but finally the Church came to accept the

new astronomy. No Christian would now return to the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. Theology has been greatly enriched and ennobled by the grander and nobler conception of nature and nature's God. Then came the antiquity of the earth and the cosmos. The Church had fondly believed that the earth had been created only 4004 B. C. To be a little more precise in the matter Dr. John Lightfoot was able to determine that "this work (creation) took place and man was created by the Trinity on the twenty-third of October, 4004 B. C., at nine o'clock in the morning."[1] But all this was surrendered and the Church finally accepted the new geology. The antiquity of man disturbed the Church again; but finally it accepted the new chronology. And the Bible remained as precious as ever. Then evolution disturbed the Church; and now it is higher criticism. Dr. Andrew D. White's "History of the Warfare Between Science and Theology" tells the whole story. Throughout all these years has not the Church been under the constant necessity of accepting finally the new science, revising its theology and then revising its interpretation of the Bible to fit the changed theology? Heresy trials throughout these years served very largely to retard the growth of the Church and to alienate from it many of the intelligent outside world. It seems that the Church would learn some day to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

[1] "Warfare Between Science and Theology," Andrew D. White, Vol. I, p. 256.

Anybody familiar with the history knows how easily heresy trials become persecutions. Is not the spirit of heresy hunting a spirit of persecution and inherently so? Some people seem to think that persecution is absent unless heretics are pursued with fire and sword; since these have ceased it is supposed that persecution has ceased. But not necessarily so. The form of penalty has been changed, but does not the spirit live? The spirit determines its character.

And the traditional attitude towards heresy leads to laxity of morals. "Hatred of heresy," says Philip Schaff, "and laxity of morals, zeal for purity of doctrine and indifference to purity of life, which ought to exclude each other, do really often stand in union. Think of the history of Pharisaism at the time of Christ, of orthodox Lutheranism in its opposition to Spener and the Pietistic movement, and of prelatical Anglicanism in its conflict with Methodism and the evangelical party. Even in the Johannean age this was the case in the church of Ephesus, which prefigured in this respect both the light and shade of the later Eastern Church."[1]

The history of heresy trials abounds in unfortunate situations for the best men. We are opposed to heresy trials for the same reason that we oppose capital punishment. In the case of capital punishment somebody must inflict the death penalty, somebody must execute the court's orders; and it degrades the man who must do it. That reason alone is sufficient to abolish capital punishment. Is not the same tend-

[1] "History of the Christian Church," Vol. III, pp. 356-357.

ency seen in a heresy trial? Somebody must prosecute; if nobody volunteers somebody must be appointed. Does it not injure the man who willingly or unwillingly does it? Does it not cultivate a spirit that is utterly inimical to Christianity? If the history of the Church teaches anything on earth it teaches that it is unsafe to trust the Church with the power of the sword in such matters.

Heresy trials invite the activities of those whose zeal exceeds their judgment and charity. It is no justification of the practice to say that it is done conscientiously. The system which provides for it puts into men's consciences what ought not to be there. And a heresy trial presents only the relation of force to weakness, the majority to the minority, and has nothing to do with right or wrong, truth or error. The size of a thing carries no moral quality. What is heterodoxy at one time becomes orthodoxy at another. No heresies were ever greater than those of Jesus and Paul; Christianity was a heresy in its early history. The Church and world tried to suppress it but it lived on. Luther was an arch heretic. The right of heresy trials creates artificial sins; it poisons the social affections and creates and cultivates rankling suspicions which destroy the spirit of brotherhood.

The spirit of heresy hunting misguides the affections of good men, leading them to hate the most lovable and to love the most hateful. The Reformers are a good example. Luther refused the hand of fellowship to Zwingli because of an insignificant difference in theology. Zwingli was one of the noblest

of the Reformers, but Luther under no conditions would have tolerated him in Wittenberg. He favoured banishing heretics. Calvin, if not responsible for it, certainly sought the death of Servetus; and Melanchthon, the mildest of the Reformers, in a letter to Calvin, expressly sanctioned that death. Calvinists and Lutherans mutually hated each other. So blinded were the Reformers that they hated the most lovable and loved the most hateful. And the spirit of intolerance works the same character of results to-day; if in a less degree, it is due to the influence of an age which makes impossible former extremes.

Laymen have a place in the ecclesiastical judicatories of many denominations. They may even outnumber ministers; especially is this true in churches that are congregational. Many of these laymen are business men with little or no education; some are professional men whose studies have been directed to law and medicine. They are certainly incompetent to sit as judges in a case for heresy where intricate points of theology are involved. They have no training in theology. Such men must be guided entirely by what the more influential ministers say. And only few ministers are really qualified to act as a judge in a case of heresy. No man can have the sympathy required for so difficult a task unless he by actual experience has learned how difficult it is to know the truth; ministers who have learned by rote what they have been taught probably from youth are disqualified.

Heresy trials never did any good. Arius was con-

demned and expelled; he soon had a great following. If he had been answered and let alone—and is not that the Christian method of dealing with heretics?—he would probably be unknown to-day. Heresy trials always scatter the objectionable doctrine. Some years ago Dr. Briggs was put on trial. Hundreds of us who knew nothing of him or his doctrinal position immediately bought every one of his books and read them. The Church now recognizes the serious blunders so often made in the past in heresy trials. Think of poor Albert Barnes on trial for heresy! And David Swing! No church would put such men on trial now. Many have suffered who were not actually put on trial. Many have been tried that no church would try to-day. Think of the heresy trials of the past that are now universally regarded as blunders; to-morrow the church would regard as blunders most of the trials it would enact to-day, as to-day it regards most of those of yesterday. Heresy trials never silenced anybody and never will. Has not that spirit cast out or otherwise discredited many of the noblest servants God ever had? Was it not the same spirit that crucified Jesus Christ? Jerome, Wyclif, Tyndale, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Bunyan and Wesley all suffered. Almost every great religious teacher and reformer has suffered through the charge of heresy; one age persecutes and humiliates its most worthy and the next age honours them. It is time to stop it. If a minister comes to teach heresy let him be answered; if that cannot be done let him alone. Gamaliel's advice is good in all such cases.

Adoniram Judson,[1] a Congregational minister, in 1812, was sent out as a missionary to the East by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This Board was organized and supported exclusively by denominations which practiced infant baptism and sprinkling. On his way to India he restudied the questions of infant baptism and the mode of baptism. Soon after landing he was led to change his views on these subjects and to embrace the Baptist position. This change disqualified him in that day for service as a Congregational minister and under a missionary board supported exclusively by those who practiced infant baptism and sprinkling.

We know nothing in all the history of missions more pathetic than the sufferings of this man of God and his noble wife for this honest change of opinion; a change that in no way involved moral lapse, or interfered with his ability to serve God. That which makes it so exceedingly pathetic is that his sufferings were so unnecessary; and had the spirit of Jesus Christ prevailed they would have been impossible. God was surely not honoured by a situation that created such embarrassments. Judson immediately joined the Baptists. He knew what would follow if he did not deliberately leave his church. Leaving it was the most painful experience of his life to that day. In contemplation of the change he said, "Must I, then, forsake my parents, the church with which I stand connected, the society under whose patronage I have come out, the companions of my missionary undertaking? Must I forfeit the good opinion of all

[1] "The Life of Adoniram Judson," Edward Judson, pp. 36–75.

my friends in my native land, occasioning grief to some, and provoking others to anger, and be regarded henceforth, by all my former dear acquaintances, as a weak, despicable Baptist?"[1] His motives were immediately impugned and the incident provoked no little irritation. Further trouble was saved by his action in joining the Baptists. But why might he not have remained where he was? Is there anything in the New Testament or in the Christianity of Jesus Christ that would have forbidden it? No Congregational missionary ever rendered a nobler service to the cause of Christ. If Jesus could use him why could not the Congregational churches? Such doctrinal questions as were involved cannot be settled; the most scholarly and Christlike differ concerning them. But all agree that such things belong to the non-essentials of Christianity. Had Judson not withdrawn from the church doubtless the Congregationalists would have felt themselves called on at once to discipline him for his want of orthodoxy. The American Board would have declined to support him.

Now, have certain churches a right to discipline a minister, loyal to Jesus Christ, because he happens to conclude that infants need not be baptized and that adults ought to be immersed? If any church has such authority where did it get it? Has one church any more authority to discipline in such matters than another? Has God authorized certain churches to discipline ministers who do not believe in infant baptism and sprinkling; and then has He au-

[1] "Memoir of Rev. Dr. Judson," Francis Wayland, Vol. I, p. 102.

thorized other churches to discipline those who happen to conclude that these things are Scriptural? This case is used as an example of what is involved in the supposed right to enforce a system of non-essential theology. What has been said of these two doctrines may be said of every doctrine concerning the non-essentials in the whole system of theology. The churches contradict each other freely in their doctrines; has each church divine authority to enforce its system of non-essentials? Shall we believe that God set certain churches to guard certain doctrines and authorizes them to exercise discipline on those who will not or cannot accept them; and that the same God then set other churches to guard certain contradictory doctrines and gave them equal authority to discipline? Or shall we believe that God has nothing to do with such discipline? The practice cannot be maintained without involving all these absurdities.

The Church has unnecessarily burdened herself, it seems to us, with an erroneous idea of her responsibilities for the teachings of her ministers. Every man is responsible for his own teaching. If somebody had said otherwise to the apostle Paul he would have replied, "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own Lord he standeth or falleth."[1] Moody felt this responsibility so much that he would not allow Frances E. Willard to work with him in his evangelistic meetings if she persisted in occupying a temperance platform with Unitarians. They separated on this account.

[1] Rom. xiv. 4.

This sense of responsibility stands in the way of the unity of Protestantism, and unless a saner idea possesses the Church Christian unity will never be possible. If men feel their responsibility for the teachings of others whom they associate and affiliate with, the narrower those associations and affiliations the less the responsibilities and therefore the better. Such a conception is narrowing and belittling. Followed to its logical conclusions it would abolish all associations and affiliations. The Church's only responsibility in the matter consists in seeing that her ministers are loyal to Jesus Christ; and that involves none of the non-essentials in theology.

It may be asked how we are to maintain an authority of administration and direction, such as has been insisted on previously, without the power to discipline any who refuse to submit to its requirements. In answering this question it would be well to remember that unity is impossible until Protestantism becomes supremely loyal to Jesus Christ. And let it be remembered that with all our present discipline we have not reached the ideal; we can never hope to reach it here. But the moral authority of a unified Church will be found sufficient to control the disloyal as well as it can ever be done in an institution afflicted with the frailties of human nature. Public opinion in the state has always accomplished what law could not do; and the moral authority of a unified Church will be found to be a far more potent influence than discipline has ever been.

It is utterly useless to talk about a union of Protestantism that proposes to corral her churches and

ministers in a common fold and to force men to do what they do not want to do. The force that binds the Church together and sends men and ministers forth to a common service must be internal and not external. Unless it can be bound together by an internal force Protestantism can never be unified. Despotism may have been possible in the Church in a despotic age, but not in this increasingly democratic age of ours.

7. Discipline in the Apostolic Church

It cannot be questioned that the Apostolic Church, in certain cases at least, exercised a very rigid discipline. Paul delivered Hymenæus and Alexander to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme.[1] On one occasion he directed the Church at Corinth, in a case which he had been able to decide in his absence, to deliver a certain man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.[2] Just what that means the Church does not know; it is supposed to include excommunication. Paul visited blindness on Elymas, the sorcerer.[3] Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for lying.[4] Certain apostolic directions and exhortations are supposed to indicate that wrong-doers were regularly punished in the early Church.

It seems to us altogether unsatisfactory to deduce from these facts any warrant for our modern church discipline. The Apostolic Church was unique in many respects. Luke tells us that "by the hands of

[1] 1 Tim. i. 20. [2] 1 Cor. v. 4–5. [3] Acts xiii. 8–11.
[4] Acts v. 1–11.

the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people."[1] Also, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."[2] The apostles themselves were inspired men; and it must be remembered that in some important sense they had no successors; that they did many things which nobody since has had authority or power to do. Their discipline was closely related to their power of wonder working; in fact wonder working was an integral part of it. Whatever purpose such things in the hands of inspired men may have served in the early Church, they passed with the apostles. Discipline was then directed by men whose knowledge enabled them to decide the merits of a case even in their absence.

We dare not attempt what the apostles did. And nobody proposes that we shall. If the apostles are to have any influence whatever in determining our system of discipline—and they certainly should have—we must do one of two things: either we must adopt the apostolic system as a whole, or with readjustments and adaptations such as our day seems to require. Adoption of the apostolic system with adaptations is all anybody asks. No Protestant Church pretends to deliver to Satan. Church-members are not struck dead for lying. The difference then between the position we take and that of those who insist on the wisdom and authority of modern church discipline is a question only of the limits of adaptation required. The apostles practiced a personal and private discipline, they gave personal warnings,

[1] Acts v. 12. [2] Acts xix. 11.

admonitions and pastoral attentions. These cannot be dispensed with. But if they practiced excommunication the Church of to-day has as much authority to discontinue that as it has to cease delivering to Satan. And so with other features of their discipline.

If the Power of the Keys gives to the Church the right of legislation, oversight and direction according to the needs of the Church, even including the right and power of the most vigorous discipline, it also authorizes the Church to discontinue a thing which has been found to be unwise in practice, whether the apostles practiced it or not. The Church is not bound by any divine legislation to continue to carry a millstone about its neck because the millstone rendered either some real or imaginary service to some previous age.

The case, however, presents no difficulty even if it were possible to establish the fact that the apostles expected the Church in all succeeding ages to punish the unworthy among its membership. It would not necessarily follow that Jesus intended such to be the case. The apostles were inspired men, but inspiration did not make them infallible in every detail. They misunderstood Jesus in other matters; they might have misunderstood Him here. It is clear that they did not always agree among themselves; they differed in their judgments often. Paul claims to have known only in part and to have prophesied only in part. He confidently expected Jesus to return during his generation, but in this he was mistaken. The other apostles all shared the same erroneous opinion.

Jesus' disciples never completely understood Him while He was with them. They fully expected Him to establish a temporal kingdom where they might have honours; and they quarrelled over these things even in His presence. There is no evidence that by some form of magic they suddenly came to a full understanding of all His teachings soon after His resurrection. The Spirit that guided them into all the truth did not bring them the whole truth at once. Revelation is necessarily gradual and progressive. Indeed that Spirit is still guiding the Church. The apostles did suddenly regain their faith, and with a new and deeper consecration took up the task of proclaiming the Gospel. But just before His departure Jesus gave the disciples a commission which extended the gospel privileges to the gentile world. They were distinctly told to "make disciples of all the nations"—the Gentiles. But ten years passed before any apostle seemed to understand this commandment. Peter would then preach to a Gentile only after a miracle thrice repeated. And the other apostles so far misunderstood the commission that a council was convened at Jerusalem to consider this radical departure from their established custom. It was a question with them as to whether such could be tolerated; there was doubt enough among the apostles concerning the wisdom of Peter's action to necessitate a conference on the subject.

Jesus taught us how to use the Old Testament. Sometimes He found in it a deeper meaning than the literal, as in the case of the sixth and seventh com-

mandments. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," which expresses the temper of the law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy,"[1] He reversed. He found fault with the Mosaic legislation concerning divorce and saw in it only a temporary concession to an unethical age, and without authority for His day. But deeper yet He found in the Old Testament the ideal law for husband and wife. He repudiated much of the letter but held to its fundamental spirit.

The Old Testament was inspired and the same principles applied to its understanding hold good for an inspired New Testament. The standard for the Church to-day is not the letter of the Bible, but the spirit of Jesus Christ as revealed to us in the Bible, and more fully in the New Testament. Any other standard would put us back into the legalism from which Jesus delivered us.

To many who have been trained to think that discipline in both morals and doctrine was of divine authority and therefore wise, the criticisms and suggestions of this chapter will doubtless appear impracticable and absurd. But it ought to be remembered that the most impracticable and absurd thing ever projected on the globe, in popular estimation, was the Christianity of Jesus Christ. His own people crucified Him because of that fact. After nineteen hundred years of the growth and influence of the Church and kingdom we cannot yet receive much of the teachings of Jesus until we have interpreted them to mean what we think they ought to mean.

[1] Matt. v. 38–39, 43–44.

The beatitudes, forgiveness seventy times seven, and loving one's enemies are examples. The history of the Christian civilization has been the vindication of the supposedly impracticable and absurd.

V

THE CONTINUED DECLINE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

1. The Situation Growing Critical

THE present condition of the Church is critical and it is useless to deny it. The Church has seemed decadent, perhaps, to every generation; doubtless in every age it has had its abuses which needed to be corrected. To many people there seems to be unusual cause for alarm over the present situation. The very existence of the Church seems to be threatened. The Church, we are told, and rightly so, cannot be maintained without ministers; and the number of young men offering themselves for this time-honoured service is on the decline. The decline has now continued for years and has become chronic. It is true that within the last year or two a slight increase of students has been noticed, but the increase has been among those without a college education. A slight increase of those less prepared for the work affords little ground for rejoicing and by no means indicates that the tide is turned.

As mentioned elsewhere the Presbyterian Church, North, in 1911, had 2,167 vacant churches out of a total of 10,051. Of the 6,000 Congregational

churches, 1,000 are vacant. Almost every denomination is handicapped because of the lack of ministers. "One denominational secretary who reported to the statistician 1,887 ministers and 3,725 churches, stated in their official organ that they had only 1,400 charges, and that 596 of their preachers are local and are not preaching, or are preaching at their own expense. Another progressive denomination faces the problem plainly, and says that it has only 5,565 preachers to supply their 10,940 churches. It adds that during the five years (1906–1911) they sustained a net loss of 1,043 preachers, 405 being lost in 1911. From their colleges they can expect a supply of only 175 ministers annually."[1]

It should be remembered that the decline of candidates for the ministry has gone steadily forward notwithstanding the Student Volunteer campaign which has been waged for a quarter of a century. While this campaign has sought volunteers for foreign missions it has brought very many into the regular ministry at home. Mr. Mott says the movement has sent a larger number into the regular ministry than into the foreign field.

According to government reports the increase of students in the United States for a period of forty years (1870–1910) has been as follows: theological students for all denominations two hundred and thirty-eight per cent.; medical students two hundred and forty-five per cent., notwithstanding a decrease of twenty per cent. since 1903; law students ten

[1] "A Living Wage for Pastors—How to Get It," F. M. Barton, *The Expositor and Current Anecdotes*, May, 1912.

hundred and eighty-three per cent.; and dental students twenty-four hundred and five per cent. These figures indicate the disproportion of increase of these professions. And 1911 records an actual decrease of one hundred and seventy-eight in the number of theological students from the year preceding.

To add to this embarrassment strong men are abandoning the work. The same influences that keep young men from entering the ministry drive older men out of it. Strong men, in larger numbers than ever before, are abandoning the ministry and entering business and the professions. When one denomination loses 1,043 ministers in five years it becomes serious. These two conditions if they continue to increase threaten a serious situation within the Church everywhere. And our personal conferences with ministers lead us to believe that the number now seriously considering the question of leaving the ministry is far greater than is generally supposed. "It is true of all, excepting one denomination," says F. M. Barton, "that the increase in the number of ministers does not equal the loss by resignation, retirement and death." [1]

Many causes have been suggested accounting for this decline. John R. Mott has written one of the most helpful volumes on the subject.[2] In their order he names what he considers the four most prominent causes: The lack of proper effort to bring young

[1] "A Living Wage for Pastors," *The Expositor and Current Anecdotes*, May, 1912.

[2] "The Future Leadership of the Church," John R. Mott.

men into the ministry; the secular and utilitarian spirit of the age; competition of other lines of service; and the fact that in preparatory schools the young men choose largely the scientific courses which unfit them from taking the regular theological courses. Other causes he mentions are a want of certitude in the faith of young men; want of liberty of expression; the high conception of the moral requirements of ministers; a want of adequate scope in the ministry for strong young men; and an inadequate financial support. Still other causes have been mentioned by others: such as the disappearance of the family altar; the absence of children and youth from the regular services; the shrinkage of the class from which ministers come; and the higher criticism. There may be something in all of these things; but we address ourselves only to those things which we regard as the more powerful causes and they include one thing not previously mentioned.

We will do well in the beginning of our inquiry as to the causes of a decline in ministerial candidates to bear in mind that the ministry has always been recruited chiefly from the church in the country and small towns—from among the middle classes. Therefore whatever the causes assigned for the decline, they must be causes that operate in the country and small towns. A failure to make this observation vitiates some things that have been said on the subject.

2. The Humiliating Treatment of Ministers

A tremendously important factor in the decline of candidates for the ministry is found in the most un-

reasonable and humiliating manner in which the average minister is treated. This humiliation abounds chiefly in the country and small towns, but it is not confined to these places. It begins when a minister begins candidating for a church. Candidating is necessary in the great majority of our churches. Ministers are trotted out like so many horses at a show, four or five in succession. Each must preach his trial sermon. In so doing he is not usually trying to save souls or to edify believers. Each is trying to show the people how big he is, how much bigger than the other aspirants, and to persuade the church to engage him instead. On such occasions the people do not come to hear the Gospel preached but "to size up" the preacher; to see how many blunders they can detect in a half hour; to see how often they can puncture him with their criticisms. The people are particularly anxious to know if the prospective pastor has what they term a good voice; if he wears a black or a white tie in the pulpit; if his gestures are properly graceful; if he squints an eye; or wears a long tailed coat; and the number of gray hairs in his head. The Almighty has always numbered the hairs of our heads, black or white; but the modern Church now does it if they are white. God is rarely honoured in such services. But it is a part of the system and the average minister must submit to it or quit. Only strong men among the larger churches escape it. But the trial sermon is no test of a minister's ability or qualification. It furnishes just such an occasion as plays into the hands of the hypocrite and brazen egotist and puts

the man of God at a most serious disadvantage. A man of God is often disgusted with the whole performance to begin with. He must preach without heaven's blessings; and he is not accustomed to that. He cannot ask God to bless his efforts because he knows that his efforts will be to make the best possible show of himself. If he should really pray at all it would be that God would excuse him for the pious fraud he was about to perpetrate. And self-respecting ministers do not like to be pitted against their brethren in such an unseemly scramble. It is no sufficient justification of the method to point out that some happy pastorates have been formed in this way. Accidents do happen occasionally.

Once on the field the minister finds many of the demands of the Church to be unreasonable, many of them to be foolish. Too much good time is required in coddling a few saints and in herding a few of the "faithful" women. The modern method of pastoral visitation is too tame for a vigorous and consecrated manhood, and is generally worse than waste. Imagine the apostle Paul making such visits. Instead of finding a band of faithful men and women ready to assist the pastor in serving those of the community who need it most, he finds that he is expected to spend his time feeding the lambs who ought to have been matured sheep more than a quarter of a century ago. An erroneous standard of success prevails almost everywhere. The statistical reports must show well. It is big congregations, big Sunday-schools and big collections, especially big collections. In no other way can one outdo his neighbour

church in their "holy rivalry." These are the pinnacles of success. The pastor who cannot accomplish these things must give place to one who can. What the people want is a "pastor that can draw" rather than a church that will hold. He is often called to help pay big debts incurred in rivalry. One naturally wonders how big a Sunday morning audience, and how many dollars on the collection plate make a successful pastor and preacher. It is superfluous to add that the Bible tests are different.

In the complexity of modern life, with our divisions in the Church, the average pastor is expected to do the work of a half-dozen men. He must make as many visits to the sick room as any doctor in the community; he must do as much speaking as any lawyer, for he must have one hundred new sermons annually, and his prayer-meeting talks and extra addresses, except among the weaker churches; he must write as much as any editor in the community; and he must study as much as any college professor. When all this is done his work is only begun. Large business and executive ability are required nowadays. The amount of work demanded of the average minister, in any other business, would be divided among a half-dozen men. There are said to be more nervous breakdowns among ministers to-day than among any other profession in this country. It is because the Church demands the impossible. Somebody has summarized the modern requirements of ministers thus: "The modern Church demands that a pastor shall have the devotion of a lover; the credulity of a child; the meekness of a lamb; the

tenderness of a woman; the patience of Job; the knowledge of Plato; the wisdom of Solomon; the optimism of a sophomore; the ubiquity of the wandering Jew; the youth of Adonis; the ability to make brick without straw; and then keep his grip packed."

The average pastor is required to please the mass of pleasure-loving misers and preach the Gospel if he can, but he must give no offense to the miserly. Pastors are sometimes allowed to preach on certain subjects once a year provided they will previously announce it and thereby allow those to escape the sermon who do not care to hear it. Temperance must often be touched lightly because valuable men may be offended. "The exchequer is the solar plexus of most churches." In very many churches a few men with a little money hold the key to the situation. Often they are not even members of the church, only members of the congregation, brothers-in-law to the church. Many of them would not have religion at ninety per cent. discount and on twelve months' time. But such men can and often do dictate the policy of the church and pastor; or they see to it that he moves on. There is a padlock on the average minister's mouth, though many of them are unconscious of it and would deny it. One prominent minister has said that the modern pulpit is "a coward's castle." There is cowardice in the ministry; but there is many times more in the average congregation.

There are few churches that will stand by a minister in the right when men with influence and money

criticize and desert him. The shameful cowardice of many a congregation is sufficient to bring a blush of shame to Christian cheeks. The minister has little liberty in preaching to many that are rich. Many do not propose to be disturbed in their ease and luxury. It is entirely too easy to withdraw their support and thereby to force a change in pastors. The minister too often is "expected to be simply an æsthetic accompaniment to an idle and dilettante life." "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts."[1] Such churches are destitute of redemptive power over their communities. Many a pastor has been forced to move because he antagonized some form of sin; and many another would lose his position if he preached the message that burns in his heart. We ease our consciences by concluding that perhaps after all the best way to preach the truth is as the cat was said to have eaten the grindstone—by degrees. So we preach the truth in homeopathic doses and provoke no opposition. Not all rich men are such as we have described; thousands of them have consecrated themselves and all they have to God, but too many have not done so.

Now, it is impossible to run the church without money. It is God's plan that Christianity should cost something. Giving is essential to the development of a truly religious life; we must give for our own good if for no other reason. And it is the most natural thing in the world for those who give the

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 3.

larger sums for the support of the church to dominate the church with their thought, ethics and ideals. The pastor and trustees very naturally seek the opinion of such men in matters of church policy. Unconsciously and insensibly they mould many a pastor's ideas. Amusements that such indulge are less likely to be put under the ban. Topics distasteful to such are frequently avoided. And it is not without great plausibility that the pastor persuades himself that it is best to do so. He is only human. But in this connection Shailer Mathews wisely remarks that, "The world will never be saved by tact."

If this condition in the church is remedied the pastor and the church must both escape from financial bondage. The minister must enlarge the prophetic element of his life and work. There is a call for a larger faith among prophets. The ancient prophet lived if he could; the modern prophet must follow the ancient way if necessary. We need more ministers of the type of the non-conforming English and Scotch who by thousands went out from their pulpits when the secular power determined to dominate the church. John the Baptist and the apostles could not be silenced by a reduction in the salary. And the church needs an enlarged faith as well as the pastor, for it can better lose any amount of money than to be dominated by the worldly and wicked.

The minister's family and social life are everybody's business. His whole social and family life are subjected to unwarranted and often meddlesome interference. His domestic economy, his methods of study and his recreations are in petty

detail picked to pieces. If he fishes or hunts or attends a ball game, with some he lacks consecration; if he does not do these things, with others he is an old fogy. Generally he must trade at certain places and accept the services of certain physicians. They are often the very ones he would not choose to serve him if he could help himself; but the custom requires him to patronize the supporters of his church. Every member of his family is subjected to criticism as no other family is. A preacher's boy is the worst in the community, they tell us. Of one thing we are sure; he ought to be the worst boy in the community. The treatment he receives is generally enough to make him so. The whole community generally expects the privilege of dictating what he shall do, where he shall go; and above all they propose to see that he is entirely different from any other boy in the community. The minister's children cannot do many things that others do, even in things indifferent. Of the minister's wife more is expected than of any other woman in the entire community; and unless she cheerfully meets the expectation she is deemed unsuited for a pastor's wife. She is often president of half the societies in the church; and she has saved many a church the expense of an assistant pastor. But no salary is provided for her. "Only the recording angel keeps tally for her final coronation." If she dresses well, with some she is too proud and needs gently reminding of it; if she does not dress well with all she is slovenly. Few clergymen can marry in a community and remain there. If a min-

ister goes outside of his own flock there is trouble because he is accused of thinking that none of his own flock is good enough for him ; if he marries one of his own flock numerous members of his church know women who would have made him a far better wife. In one way and another he is humiliated until he moves on. No other family has half so many petty annoyances.

The length of the average pastorate, something over three years, is disappointing. Thousands last only one year, some even less. One church known to us had fifteen pastors in fifteen years. One man had stayed two years and two six months each. It is not pleasant to drag around from community to community every few years. But it is really not the fact that the minister must move so often that hurts ; that is bad enough ; but it is the reasons that call for his removal that humiliate. He must move for the most nonsensical reasons imaginable. The pastor fails to call on certain people while they are sick. They had a telephone in their home ; the same telephone the pastor had ; but no member of the family ever reported the sickness. No other person reported it. The pastor never heard of it ; but the family are offended. Another takes offense because the pastor preaches politics ; he wanted " the Gospel." Among certain people there is a very insistent demand for " the Gospel," " the Gospel." Their idea is that the Gospel is something that disturbs nobody—a soothing syrup as it were. They are unable to see that the Gospel is Christ's remedy for all manner of evils, political demagogism and trick-

ery among others. We never yet heard a man object to the pastor's preaching of politics provided it was the kind of politics he liked.

The climax of humiliation in removals, perhaps, is reached by the pious old frauds who have not the courage to speak their real or fancied grievances but who demand the removal of the pastor "for the good of the church." Those making such demands pretend to be satisfied themselves; with them the pastor is all right; but "the good of the church" requires a change! More cowardly hypocrisy is hidden by that phrase than any other we know. And there is no defense; he must move.

If, as occasionally happens, faults and trifles are magnified and fancied grievances are invented as the occasion requires, the poor pastor is helpless and defenseless. He must go as perhaps his predecessor did. But the experiences of removals, as well as many other humiliating experiences of the pastor, rarely reach the public. The poor pastor is loath to talk about such; and what good would he accomplish generally if he did? Those guilty gently garnish the situation with such lovely excuses and cunningly devised justifications when any part of it comes to light that the public remain ignorant. Altogether it is a life of such uncertainty that one is constantly in suspense.

The minister's pay is very poor. Yet the small salary has little influence compared with two other things connected with the salary.

The first difficulty is a small salary paid by a wealthy church, or by a church abundantly able to

pay more than it does pay. A small salary paid by a well-to-do church is a very different thing from a small salary paid by a church that is doing its best. A small salary will enable a pastor to live on a par with poor people; and a true pastor is satisfied to live on a par with the average. And it contributes to both his pleasure and his usefulness to know that his church is doing all that it can afford to do for his comfort and success. But a small salary will not enable the pastor to live on a par with the average in a well-to-do church; and every pastor is expected to live on a par with at least the average of his church. The starved pastor in such a church sees many of his parishioners enjoying every luxury; able to take their families on vacations; to make extensive trips and to buy what they please; and to own automobiles for pleasure. Often there is no hesitation among church-members in spending large sums of money for luxuries; but they contribute only a small sum to the support of the church; consequently the church can pay only a very small salary to its minister. The pastor is not able to meet his demands. Now ministers instinctively revolt at such treatment, if they are capable of righteous indignation—and if not so they are worthless in the ministry. They feel the injustice of such treatment; they feel its dishonesty and its tyranny. Jesus could do no mighty works in certain places because of the treatment He received from the people. Such treatment makes it impossible for a pastor to be really serviceable to such people.

Ministers may have once regarded it as a special

mark of piety to preach to the well-to-do at starvation wages, but if so they are changing their opinions and coming to the conclusion that God does not impose such duty on any man. They are getting tired of making a sacrifice that they believe God neither honours nor rewards. God honours and rewards sacrifices that are necessary and every true minister will make them ; but it is never necessary for a poor minister to work at starvation wages while he serves wealthy Christians. Instead it is a positive sin to serve the well-to-do at starvation wages because it encourages them to be dishonest. Then, it needlessly starves the minister's family. A well-to-do church that knowingly requires its pastor to live on starvation wages is dishonest. We had just as well face that fact. And if a pastor cannot teach his church to be honest he is wasting his time.

The second difficulty in connection with the salary is the humiliating manner in which the smaller ones are generally paid. The great majority of our ministers serve churches that pay small salaries ; it is only a small per cent. of them who can command what might even be termed a fair one. Meeting the financial obligations in the smaller churches is often very difficult. If the people paid according to their ability it would not be so, but they do not. The salary is often raised by sociables and suppers, at least some part of it. More often it is done by public appeals in which the pastor is represented as being very needy. This is generally true enough but it is exceedingly humiliating to have that fact kept constantly before the people. House to house visita-

tion and solicitation is common; and it is not uncommon in some parts of the country for the pastor to find it necessary to go out and help to beg his own salary. And it is still more common for the pastor to find it necessary to make a handsome contribution to the "annual deficit." This occurs among the wealthy very frequently. Just think of it. Wealthy churches begging from their underpaid pastors in order to make up a small deficit! True men are humiliated by such conduct and made to feel that they are paupers and not workmen worthy of their hire. Many churches by keeping behind with the salaries force their pastors to live on credit which costs more and otherwise embarrasses. And finally when the pastor leaves, the amount of salary then due quite frequently is never paid. This is the case even where a definite contract exists between the pastor and the church. Few ministers will sue for the amount due on salary and the people know it. In certain churches a Christian's pledge for church support is supposed to be good for only one year; then the slate is cleaned and all starts over again. Amounts of pledges unpaid at the end of the year are so much saved to the man who pledged. As a result of all these conditions few ministers have any prospect for old age except the prospect of poverty and consequent suffering. And old age begins in the prime of manhood, too.

The climax of humiliation is reached in the age limit which has been erected within these recent years. Some good men are unable to find such a limit, but it exists nevertheless. In every calling

under the sun, except the ministry, age and experience are an asset. But the minister nowadays must be a young man with "sprouting beard and black hair." Otherwise he will not be considered by many of what are termed our best churches. And this demand for enthusiastic young men usually comes from the less spiritual among the membership; a class of people who ought never to be permitted to rule any church. What right has any set of church-members to insist on dictating the policy of a church of Jesus Christ when they have not attended the Sunday-school since they were married except perhaps to hear some child recite at Christmas? They are never at the prayer-meeting; and they do not feel the need of anything to satisfy their hungering and thirsting after righteousness except an occasional Sunday morning sermon. They feel themselves under practically no obligations to other people; they do not believe in the great commission, or anything else in church life that means any sort of real sacrifice. What right have they to dictate the policy of the church of Jesus Christ?

To be a minister generally means four years of college and three years in the seminary. These cost thousands of dollars. Now a minister must spend this time and money for a preparation that entitles him to the privilege of preaching a few years, either to a poor or to a well-to-do church at a salary that barely supports him, and then at fifty he is quite likely to find himself on the shelf. The proposition is not very attractive; but that is just what it means to be a minister to-day. No wonder the

young men are not falling over themselves to get into such a ministry. How many lawyers, surgeons and physicians would we have if they were frequently forced out at fifty? Benjamin Franklin was sent to France as minister when he was seventy. He did the best work of his life, perhaps, between his seventy-first and seventy-eighth birthdays. The state of New York had a statute that removed Chancellor Kent from the bench because he was sixty-five years old. After that he wrote his Commentaries, which are among the most important books to be had in the study of jurisprudence.

Inferior ideals, the lack of a worthy programme, and the consequent poorer type of Christian, are very largely responsible for the mortifying treatment of the minister. The larger churches, which more nearly serve the kingdom, do less of these things than the smaller churches. The same thing is true largely of the meddlesome interference with the minister's family and social life. The numerous and unreasonable demands on the minister are due very largely to two things: the impossibility of a division of labour among ministers in a divided church, and the unchristian rivalries and duplication which are a necessary consequence of our divisions. The unsatisfactory manner of paying the salaries is traceable to the same source.

3. The Want of Liberty of Expression

Young men in greatly increasing numbers choose the scientific courses in the preparatory schools of the country rather than the time-honoured classical

course. In their study of sciences, both in their preparatory and college work, they are taught to think for themselves; the largest possible liberty of thought and investigation is encouraged. Naturally enough young men educated in this atmosphere decline to enter a work that proposes to rob them of such liberties.

It is not that so many young men are unorthodox. It is true that the changes wrought by scientific study and by the critical study of the Bible have for the time being robbed many young men of a certitude in their faith. Many are not certain as to just what they do believe; but few young men are unalterably committed to unorthodoxy. While generally they are ready to investigate the matter reverently they are unwilling to enter a work that determines in detail in advance what they shall believe. And even those who are sure of their present orthodoxy do not know to what conclusions they may finally be led; and knowing how men are hampered by creed-bound churches they leave the ministry alone.

A powerful cause in the decline of candidates for the ministry is this want of freedom which legitimately belongs to the prophet of the Lord. Young men decline to enter the ministry, says John R. Mott, because "they are confronted by the spectacle of trials for heresy, of the exiling of men from the confidence and companionship of their fellow ministers, of the persecution of certain ministers as a result of the misunderstanding of their position by the people whom they unselfishly serve—all this and

much more, not because of any lapse in character, not because of any lack of efficiency and ability in discharging the regular functions of the ministry, not because of any failure in the spirit of service, but because of not expressing their religious convictions in terms which their own ecclesiastical bodies have formulated and regard as essential." [1]

It is not a license to be disloyal to Jesus Christ that young men want. That would be good ground for refusing them the privilege of ministering in His name. What they want is a larger liberty in their thinking on matters that are non-essential to the Christian's faith. But they demand more than liberty in doctrinal thinking; they demand liberty also to preach their convictions in the application of the spirit and principles of Jesus Christ to the personal, social, industrial, civic and national problems of the day.

New problems confront every age and the living issues of the age are a legitimate field for the minister. If the Church is to guide and inspire the civilization which she has created the pulpit must contribute of its influence and power to the work. This can be done only with liberty of expression. And so long as other fields offer what young men regard as equal or superior opportunities for service and less embarrassments the modern young man will choose what he considers the more desirable field for his service.

This is an evil which costs the Church many of the most promising and strongest young men, who, under other conditions, would enter the ministry.

[1] "The Future Leadership of the Church," p. 77.

Weaklings and the incompetent are rarely if ever kept out of the ministry on this account; it is only young men of positive character and intellectual vigour who demand liberty of expression. And in no age of the Church's history have such young men been needed as they are needed to-day. The Church can better afford to lose a dozen weaklings than one of the more vigorous and promising.

It is no sufficient answer to the argument for liberty in the ministry to point out the lack of liberty in journalism, among professors in political economy, politicians and public servants in general. Such conditions outside of the Church do not increase the attractiveness of the situation within the Church, where above all places on earth men ought to be able to be free and thoroughly sincere.

4. The Loss of Faith in the Traditional Minister's Work

A still more important factor perhaps than any mentioned in the decline of candidates for the ministry is found in the fact that the world is losing faith in the traditional and time-honoured minister's work. There is a wide-spread loss of faith in organized Christianity of the type we have. Most of our churches are operated to-day on an antiquated theory of the Church's function. This is especially true in the smaller towns and country. We have in this country one hundred and sixty-four separate Protestant denominations. These more or less belligerent denominations were originally formed with the idea that each, at least, was the truest represent-

ative of heaven on earth, that each had something vital to offer that no other church had. Some unfortunately supposed themselves to be the only representatives that heaven had on earth. For many years each of our denominations boasted and paraded its reasons for separate existence. In the past at some time at least each of our churches—has there been any exception?—has felt that the Almighty would not be adequately represented if it should cease operations.

But in giving its reasons for separate existence no church ever pretended that it offered a better opportunity to play the Good Samaritan; or that it was capable of producing a higher grade of manhood or womanhood. No denomination ever boasted that it had a peculiar ability, fitness or willingness to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and the prisoner and generally to practice the brotherhood of man. These things were not thought of as essential marks of the Church of God. And yet these are to be the things which constitute the supreme test of the Judgment. Each denomination in the past justified its existence on the ground of some "beloved doctrine" of which it made an exclusive specialty. But when these "beloved doctrines" are examined they are found to be, as we have already seen, either things that no human being ever knew anything about, or things of no practical importance whatever.

Christianity in the days when denominations were made was supposed to be a dogma rather than a life and inspiration. Christianity first of all was sup-

posed to be a revelation concerning God, Christ, sin and salvation. And loyalty to Jesus Christ was supposed to be identical with assent to this body of doctrine. According to this conception the Church must first make theologians and then Christians; whereas the Biblical conception is first to make Christians by bringing men into personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ and afterwards they may become theologians. The function of the Church was supposed to be to build and to maintain dogmas. The principal function of the minister with such a conception of the Church was to justify the existence of his little denomination and to convert all men to his opinion. Every minister in the country had a tremendously big job on his hands when such ideas obtained; and those ideas are not entirely gone yet. Each community according to this idea had a right not only to the Gospel but to every variety that the market afforded. Hence the large number of churches almost everywhere whose usefulness is scarcely demonstrated. Communities could not be over-churched in those days because each denomination was supposed to possess some special divine reason for its separate existence. Members of one church were legitimate prey for all the others; and they "preyed on each other" oftener than they "prayed to their God."

Now, these ideas of the Church and the ministry have well-nigh disappeared especially among the younger people. A very large part of the world and the Church have lost their interest in such things and naturally enough in the machinery for their

propagation and perpetuation. Our ideas of the worth of the Church and the ministry have changed; not the Church and the minister as they should be, but as they are. The world is interested and always will be in the great fundamentals of our holy religion in which all denominations are one. And the world is interested in a church that attempts to do what the Church was intended to do: to practice the presence of God and the brotherhood of man. But the differences that divide the Protestant world have ceased to interest men. The younger Christians of all denominations are beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learning war no more. We are making the discovery that the Lord never had any special delight in religious wars; and that the inspiration for all such had more of sulphur than incense about it.

Now, while a great change in our ideas concerning the Church and the function of the minister has occurred, here we are with the extensive church machinery built up in "war times" and nothing is possible at present except to perpetuate it. Under the system which prevails doubt of his real usefulness eats many a minister's soul like a canker. And it is the most vigorous and capable men in the ministry who are thus afflicted.

Consider what it means to be a minister under such circumstances. While the cities are not so badly over-churched as are the smaller towns few ministers can ever hope to reach the city. The city has its disadvantages, however; for there, success is denominational. The fundamental purpose

of the minister must be to build his denomination which is often done at the expense of the kingdom. It is common to find a half dozen of the wealthiest churches in the cities crowded together within a stone's throw of each other in some favoured spot, while large sections of the city are unsupplied with the Gospel. This fact makes conditions in the city little better than in the smaller towns. The city with its denominational limitations and requirements furnishes not an altogether satisfactory field for a pastor consecrated to the spread of the kingdom of God. But conditions in the smaller towns and country are far less satisfactory. What inducements are there then for a young man to consecrate himself to the ministry to-day? The great majority of them can have the privilege of spending their whole ministerial lives serving as pastors of little churches somewhere that ought never to have existed, that ought not to exist now, and that never can hope for the time when they ought to exist; churches that needlessly divide the religious forces where they are located and are therefore a positive hindrance to the cause of Christ. That is the fate of the majority of ministers. Can young men be blamed if they are unwilling to waste their lives? Very few ever have the privilege of serving churches that really ought to exist; and those who finally come to that privilege do so as a rule only after years spent in the service of the useless churches. The only place where one can be sure of being useful is on the foreign field; and the work on the foreign field is not always unembarrassed by our sectarianism.

This ministry at home seems to the young men with good red blood to be an antiquated business, one out of touch with the times. They feel that to be a minister of the prevailing type and to do the conventional pastoral work is a work not big enough in things worth while to use more than a small fraction of a full grown soul's energy. But if a man enters the ministry he must do the conventional thing; it is a rare man who can ignore and change customs long established. There are few Luthers and Wesleys. Therefore young men stay out of the ministry and strong men abandon it. And denominationalism is at the bottom of the whole difficulty.

5. The Competition of Other Fields of Service

Another important factor in the decline of candidates for the ministry is that young men find so many other fields where they can answer the call of God, do more good than in the present handicapped ministry, and escape its needlessly disagreeable things. The distinction between the sacred and secular has been abolished. All useful callings are sacred. God can be served anywhere. The economic, the commercial, the social, the political, the ecclesiastical and the domestic spheres are all coördinate phases of the life of the service of God. Any other conception narrows and dwarfs the conceptions of the religious life and leaves the great practical realities of life to the devil. True worshippers no longer worship at Jerusalem, or in certain particular spheres, but everywhere and in all they do. Hard

work and small pay have little influence in the matter. The trouble is the humiliation and embarrassment, the waste of time, money and energy which seems to be inseparably bound up with a service that means so little to the kingdom of God, conducted as it is and must be while the present policy prevails.

There is no decline in the number of young men offering themselves for other lines of Christian service. There is no decline of young men offering themselves for foreign missions. "The Student Volunteer Movement for foreign missions, during its twenty years' history, has had the largest number of volunteers offer themselves for the most difficult fields."[1] When Stanley wanted a few young men to go with him on his last perilous African tour he had hundreds of volunteers. Lieutenant Shackleton had no difficulty in finding men to join him in his effort to find the South Pole.[2] Trained nurses and physicians brave every danger. Every war records numerous examples of devotion to hardship. Dean Bosworth of Oberlin is quoted by Mr. Mott as saying: "A strong man looks for a field and not a hole." Few ministers really have a field, or can have one in this country. And Dean George Hodges is quoted in the same connection as saying: "Men do not feel called upon to endure hardship for the sake of a theory of church government."[3] Why should they? Especially is this true when men have come to recognize that all modern church government is entirely the

[1] "The Future Leadership of the Church," John R. Mott, p. 191.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 189–190. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

invention of the Church, necessary of course, but an invention nevertheless. There is no decline in the number of young men offering themselves for the Young Men's Christian Association work. General Booth had no difficulty in finding volunteers to go into reeking tenements with the Gospel. There never was a time in the history of the world when so many men and women were unselfishly giving their services to humanity, enduring hardships and earning small pay. People are glad to do it when they can be conscious that they are rendering valuable service to the world.

The Church has not lost its religion; religion of a certain type only is on the decline. The world has more vital Christianity to-day than ever before, notwithstanding the evils which afflict the Church. That is one of the chief reasons why young men refuse to enter the ministry. They are becoming too religious to waste time, money and energy perpetuating denominational methods and blunders. Yes; the modern young man is becoming too vitally Christian to enter the old time ministry; he refuses to pay such an exorbitant price in needless humiliation, in unnecessary suffering, in time and money so largely wasted, for the privilege of letting empty buckets down into empty wells and then drawing them up again. Strong men are abandoning the ministry because God is calling them out of it; fewer young men are entering because God is calling fewer into it. The decline of ministerial candidates is probably one of God's methods of bringing Protestantism to her senses. Not till a large part of the

churches of all denominations are pastorless for the want of ministers will many Christians consent to the unity of the Church. But when that time comes—and it seems to be coming—the Protestant world will be forced to unite.

It is a significant fact to which Shailer Mathews calls our attention in "The Church and the Changing Order," that it is not the pastors who are agitating the question of the ministerial supply so much as it is the professors in theological seminaries and secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Associations. Very many pastors do not want their sons to enter the ministry and therefore they remain silent. This is a singularly unfortunate situation, but it can be remedied only by offering young men what they consider a worthier work.

The four reasons we have assigned for the decline of candidates for the ministry: their humiliating treatment, their want of liberty of expression, the loss of faith in the traditional minister's work, and the competition of other fields of service are all reasons that appeal most profoundly to the stronger young men, the very character of young men most needed to-day. It is an easy matter to ridicule the idea of the minister's humiliating treatment, to minimize it and to say that the right kind of young men are not influenced by such small objections. It is far more easy to do those things than to convince the young men that what they have seen is not true, or that God imposes on men an obligation to endure so much abasement, the larger part of which they know to be unreasonable and foolish, when they be-

lieve they can serve God with equal acceptance and escape it.

Sermons setting forth the claims of the gospel ministry and campaigns made by the Student Volunteers or others will do very little to remedy the situation. That is working at the wrong end of the difficulty. The conditions under which the minister labours and the character of the service he is expected to render must be improved. It is not necessary to remove hardships from the work; that would be a disadvantage. Hardships assist to keep out the unworthy and to develop the worthy. Young men must be offered a work that they can see is worthy of their best energies and efforts. Then if they are to serve well-to-do Christians they must be provided salaries that bear some more just relation to the demands made on them. The modern young man is not going to spend his life serving the rich and well-to-do and then live on charity when he is superannuated. If necessary to live on charity in his old age in order to enjoy the privilege of rendering a worthy service to the poor and the professedly ungodly he will do it. But we discuss the question of ministers' salaries in the next chapter.

VI

THE INADEQUACY OF MINISTERS' SALARIES

THE subject of ministers' salaries has received more than usual attention within recent years. The critical character of the situation is forcing men to speak out. According to government statistics there were in 1906 in the United States 146,451 Protestant ministers, for the most part cultured, refined and educated, and with families to support and educate on an average salary that is admittedly inadequate. A very large part of these men have spent four years in college and three years in the seminary in order that they may be the better prepared to please God and to serve men. The expenses of living have increased till it has ceased to be possible to live on the average salary received and render an acceptable and profitable service.

1. A Most Serious Situation

This condition, we believe, constitutes one of the serious problems confronting the Church. Now, the poor salaries paid ministers are not due entirely to the poverty of the Church or to its divisions ; but the divided condition of the Church has much to do with it. The Church in this country is rich. The tobacco-using members of our churches probably spend

enough money annually to make ministers' salaries all they ought to be. And tobacco is only one luxury; other luxuries abound. There is plenty of money for almost everything except church support. This situation is a poor compliment to the Christianity of the modern Church.

The average minister's salary in the United States is only six hundred and sixty-three dollars, and outside of the one hundred and fifty largest cities it is only five hundred and seventy-three dollars. The Commission appointed by President Roosevelt to settle the anthracite coal strike reported that the average annual earnings of certain classes of labourers in Pennsylvania were as follows:

Stablemen, - - -	$689.52
Pumpmen, - - -	685.72
Carpenters, - - -	603.90
Blacksmiths, - - -	557.43[1]

Bricklayers, stonecutters and common day labourers receive better pay than ministers. And they are not required to spend four years in college and three years in the seminary, as a necessary preparation for their work, neither are they so likely to be laid on the shelf at fifty. Moreover they can choose their own scale of living expenses.

If some modern trust or corporation, such as the steel trust, or some great railway system, should get into its grasp thousands of men with the same de-

[1] Bulletin of the Department of Labour, No. 46, May, 1903, p. 607.

gree of culture and refinement and then hold them year after year on an average salary of six hundred and sixty-three dollars, while piling up tremendous dividends for themselves, what would the public say of such conduct? There would be no justification for such conduct in a corporation. We would hear the cry of robbery on every side. But is not that exactly what the Church is doing to-day? It has men in its grasp and forces them to work at starvation wages and seems to think that it is all right. But why is it not just as bad for a Church to do this as for a business corporation to do it, if the Church is able to pay more? There is no difference. If the Church were poor it would be different but the Church is continually tearing down and building greater barns in order to bestow its goods. And if the Church thinks it will continue to have plenty of ministers willing to live on the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables, then "the Church knows neither God, the modern young man, nor the signs of the times."

The *Bibliotheca Sacra* is quoted[1] as putting the situation thus: "As a simple matter of truth the minister is the hardest-worked wage-earner in the country. No first-class carpenter or plumber or mason or other skilled artisan has to surrender so many personal rights and submit to so many indignities, both with respect to himself and his family, as the average minister of to-day; and the wages of the skilled artisan are now higher to boot." *The*

[1] "The Minister of To-day," James H. Ecob, D. D., *Homiletic Review*, February, 1912, p. 113.

Nation is also quoted by the same writer as saying : "This is the ministry of to-day as it actually is—the lowest wages possible, the largest surrender of personal rights, the least progressive institution to serve, and the least certainty of tenure possible."

The minister's pay is entirely out of keeping with the reasonable demands of the work ; and it is not in keeping with the talents and ability of the men engaged. When the average salary is only six hundred and sixty-three dollars there must be many thousands of ministers who receive less than that sum. Thousands are serving for three hundred or four hundred dollars and even less, especially mission workers.

Mission workers exhibit an almost divine devotion to their work. They do the hardest work, brave dangers, suffer exposure and endure terrific physical and mental strain. It is by far the least agreeable work and the poorest paid. To offer such men the customary "missionary barrel" of cast-off clothing and such like, ought to be regarded as an insult, offered as these things often are by professed Christians living in luxury.

The ministry is not a money making business. The man who enters it for financial considerations is unworthy of respect. But it is no worse for one Christian to preach solely for money than for another Christian to receive the benefit of a faithful minister's service for little or nothing, if he is able to pay for it.

While many ministers receive salaries ranging from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars few can save

a penny for old age. The demands on them are such as to leave nothing when necessary expenses have been met. Even higher salaried ministers, and the percentage of ministers whose salaries amount to more than fifteen hundred dollars must be small, often find expenses running ahead of income. Salaries that would be sufficient for lawyers, doctors and others on the same social plane will not always enable ministers to meet the demands of their churches and make their work a success.

2. Why the Average Minister's Salary is so Small

Let us inquire into the reasons why ministers receive such small salaries. In general the condition is due to the miserable system of finance which is practiced in our churches, or rather to the utter want of any financial system whatever.

It is God's purpose to evangelize the whole world. To that end He gave His Son "that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life." Does anybody imagine for a moment that God sent His Son to save the world, that He providentially called into existence a Church as His agent to whom He has committed the work, and that He calls men to carry the Gospel to all mankind, but that He has made no provision for a financial system which would make the work possible? Is anybody so foolish as to imagine that such a stupendous undertaking can be pushed to a successful conclusion without any system of finance? God sends no manna to feed His servants, neither does He pro-

vide clothing. As things are, many Protestant churches are financed in a most haphazard way and without system. Christian men and women give only when they feel like it; they are governed by feeling, by the emotions of a passing moment, by impulse, and not by principle.

As a result the local church is often a miserable beggar, limping through life with a staff in one hand and a hat in the other, and on that account receives the contempt due beggars. It is rather difficult to make the world believe that the average church-member gets much out of his Christianity when it is obvious to everybody that he must be cornered into giving most of what he gives to its support. Millions of men and women profess to love the Church most devotedly; but they must be begged for money for its support. Millions profess loyalty to Jesus Christ and believe with all their hearts in a special divine call to the ministry, to let them tell it; but they must be begged for money for the minister's support. Millions profess that God wants them to send the Gospel to the heathen; but they must be begged for every penny they invest in that work. Almost every church in the land has a Ladies' Aid Society, whose business is to serve suppers, give socials, cantatas, teas and bazaars, and otherwise to persuade "devoted Christians" to turn loose a little money for the Lord's work. And this in a day when, as S. W. Purvis, D. D., puts it, "the most colossal gifts of humanity's history are being presented; millions for education, for institutions, for libraries and memorials; millions for universal peace and the arts of

peace." It is no wonder the world often doubts the sincerity of the Church.

There are a few things we need to face heroically. A conversion that does not reach the pocketbook does not reach the heart. And God does not call one set of men to make all the sacrifice necessary to save the world. If any man will not bear his part of the burden one of three things must be true: He has never been converted, he has backslidden, or he has not been properly instructed as to his duty. It is as much the minister's duty to preach God's Word concerning money as concerning anything else. Much of the trouble is due to the minister's failure properly to enlighten the people on the subject. And ministers and churches do men wrong, and they wrong themselves when they accept small gifts from well-to-do men. When well-to-do men professing to be Christians think to satisfy their consciences by stingy gifts they ought to be denied the privilege. As long as rich men are allowed to make miserly gifts to the Church they will never cease to be misers. Such ought to be awakened, and one of the best ways to do it is to refuse their offerings till they are large enough to be some credit to their sincerity.

Mormons have a system of finance; Dowie's followers had a system; both practice the tithe system. The state requires a financial system, but not more so than the Church. There was a system of finance in the old Jewish Church. Every person was expected to give at least a tithe of his income to the Lord. After the tithe was paid free-will offerings were expected from many. The temple was built

with free-will offerings, and free-will offerings provided for the poor. The Jewish Church was not called on to evangelize the world, and needed no missionary money. Yet the law required at least a tithe of their income. Does anybody suppose that the programme of Christianity as outlined by Jesus can be carried out with less than a tithe? If God required a tithe from the old Jewish Church when no missionary work was to be attempted, what would we expect Him to require now? Certainly not less than a tithe.

One thing is sure: no man can be a disciple without practicing self-denial and self-sacrifice; nothing is made clearer in the Scriptures. Said Jesus, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."[1] "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple."[2] "So, therefore, whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple."[3] "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."[4] "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume."[5] These words are not spoken to ministers simply. By far too many men are playing at religion; their hearts are elsewhere and their money goes elsewhere. It takes sacrifice to get into heaven, or the spirit that would make it if the occasion arose.

Every member of the church should give to its

[1] Luke ix. 23. [2] Luke xiv. 27. [3] Luke xiv. 33.
[4] Matt. x. 39. [5] Matt. vi. 19.

support, the rich and the poor alike. Poverty is no excuse for failing to give. As well plead poverty as an excuse for failing to read the Bible, for failing to attend church services, or for failing to pray. Giving is an essential element of worship. To be Scriptural it must be systematic, and must bear some ratio to the income. The only ratio mentioned in the Bible is the tithe. Such a system would solve the financial problem. Such a system a unified Church could sanction, and its sanction would carry great weight. But any system would be an improvement on present haphazard methods.

In the second place, that salaries are small is due largely to thoughtlessness. The church generally is ignorant of what the minister really ought to receive. Many have never thought on the subject, or when they have, they have not looked into the matter in an effort to determine what would be right. Ministers hesitate to preach on such subjects; they are liable to be misunderstood if they do. But there is need of wide-spread information, not only as to the small sum paid ministers, but as to what they must have if they are to render their best services to the church. The proper ecclesiastical authority could do much to solve the problem.

Another very serious cause of smallness of salaries is a wide-spread erroneous idea as to how a church ought to be run. Many people have heard that the Gospel is free and have taken that to mean that they are absolved from all obligations to support the church. Labouring under such impressions many Christians have become pauperized. In an earlier

day in this country when many ministers did little more than preach, certain ministers preached the idea that the minister whom God called had nothing to do but to open his mouth and God would fill it. He could preach without preparation. Therefore, since no special efforts were required in order to preach, and since preaching was the chief function of the minister, they needed no salary. This idea was once very common ; it is more powerful to-day than is commonly supposed.

The Gospel is free but the institutions and men that are required for its propagation require support. And God never does for men what they can do for themselves. The Church must preach a free Gospel, but it must be supported while it does so. The finances of the Church are a matter of business, as well as worship, and must be managed according to practical business methods.

Another secret of small salaries is the fact that the amounts of most ministers' salaries were fixed many years ago during a period of financial depression. Business has revived, wages have increased and the cost of living has gone up, but ministers' salaries have remained the same. Thousands of churches to-day pay the same amount they paid ten and fifteen years ago.

Another secret of small salaries is that the amount of ministers' salaries is generally fixed by the church ; and the minister has nothing to do but to accept it. And often the church seems to think that the difference between what the minister will accept and what he should receive is legitimate gain. There-

fore the church generally offers the smallest possible amount that is thought necessary to get the character of man it desires. Now, it is not fair that the minister is not represented in fixing his salary. If the people fixed the amounts they paid lawyers and doctors these professions would be underpaid, too. Physicians combine and fix their standard of prices. Lawyers do the same. Merchants combine and regulate prices. Labour unions demand and receive shorter hours and better pay. Is it right for them to do so? Then why should not the minister be represented, at least, in fixing his salary? The proper ecclesiastical court—the presbytery, the conference or association—could take the matter in hand. That would allow both sides to be represented. Justice is not likely to be done where both sides are not represented.

Another cause of small salaries is that a long-continued inadequate support of the minister has resulted in a noxious system of alms; and this noxious system of alms reacts to keep salaries down. Ministers must have a reduction in the cost of goods at the stores, free tickets to such shows as they will attend, and rates at the hotels. Moving expenses are generally provided extra. If ever able to send children to college free tuition awaits them there. Physicians treat his family free, or for a small sum. And he receives gratuities at the altar and at the bier. In case of long or unusual sickness in his home or a trip to the hospital, special offerings are frequently made to him because it is known that he is not financially able to meet his bills without

it—all because he is known to serve at starvation wages.

This condition of things breeds two evils: First, it pauperizes the minister. That is not good for his manhood, nor is it a pleasant experience. If he is the right kind of man it humiliates him beyond description. To be forced to accept what is commonly understood to be charity is all that a decent, deserving, underpaid man can stand; and it lowers his standing in the community. The world does not like a pious mendicant, and it looks on him with mingled pity and contempt; and in this the world is right.

The minister ought to pay for what he gets as other people do; and his standing in the community will never be what it should be till he can do so. But he can never pay as other men pay until he is paid for his services on a basis that enables him to do so.

The second evil is that people generally imagine that a minister's extra gifts are so generous that he needs little salary. That, however, is far from the facts in the case. Certain ministers fare better in the matter of extra gifts than others. Communities differ in their generosity in such matters. The general average is very small indeed. Certain dry-goods and clothing stores are all that ever gave the writer any discount. But it often happens that the prices of the goods are arbitrarily raised on purpose so that the discount can be given without sacrificing any part of the usual profits. In this way the minister often pays more for his goods than other people. Gifts for marriages and funerals have been small with the present writer. He has been per-

forming marriage ceremonies for a number of years and for the entire period of his ministerial career his average has been only thirty dollars per year—certainly a small sum. Funerals on the whole have not only not paid anything, but they have been a source of considerable expense; money received from funerals would not nearly repay what they have cost. All other gifts have been counterbalanced and more by the expenses for "thank you" jobs. The Baptist church of New York made a correspondence study of conditions in six associations of the state. They received replies from one hundred and forty-six churches of various denominations. Omitting three ministers who received high fees they found that the average pastor received in fees approximately thirty-six dollars annually.

Another serious difficulty is that we have too many churches and ministers to support in this country, and too much expensive church machinery. The average small town and village and frequently the country is literally cursed with church houses and organizations. While these conditions necessarily make the pastor's salary smaller than otherwise it might be, they do not justify the exceedingly small salaries that are paid. Thousands of our churches, as small and poor as they are, could double and treble the pastor's salary if the membership paid only one-half or even one-fourth of the tithe of their income.

3. Some Evils of Inadequate Salaries

Many ministers are forced to divide their best energies and time between some form of business

and the church in order to live. This is legitimate when it is necessary ; but the minister who does so is thereby unfitted for his best work as a pastor and preacher. Pinched by poverty as so many are they cannot be free from worldly care. They know that they must present the outward appearance of men more prosperous than they really are. The length of their service at any given place, their usefulness while there and their possibilities for a future field when they leave, all conspire to force them to make a satisfactory personal appearance with themselves and families.

Ministers are so badly handicapped financially that thousands of them are constantly on the outlook for any vacancy that promises the slightest relief. Recently a Presbyterian church in Iowa was vacant. It paid eight hundred dollars and manse. Forty applications were received. Another paying twelve hundred dollars and manse had one hundred applications. The work of the minister amid such embarrassments and uncertainties cannot be satisfactory to himself or very profitable to the people.

Underpaid ministers must necessarily render a poor service to the churches. So large a part of their meagre salaries must go for the necessities of life that they cannot provide the books, magazines and other things needful for the success of their work. The average minister is not to blame for rendering an inferior service in the pulpit ; he is doing the best he can.

Some years ago Edward Bok created a great sensation when he said that people did not attend church

because the average sermon was not worth the trouble to go and hear it. He was right about it; and conditions are little if any improved to-day. But do not blame the poor minister; generally he is doing his best. He is amply capable of better things, but the meagre salary he receives forbids the things that would make his sermons and work a success. What would a farmer in Iowa or Illinois do with four hundred acres of the best soil and with only the farming equipment of fifty years ago and most of that worn out? He would have as much chance to succeed as the average minister has; but he would fail for the same reason that many of the best of the ministry fail.

Another evil of small salaries is the needless humiliation of a poverty in old age that forces many of the most consecrated ministers to live on charity. Many churches provide a fund for the needy among the superannuated. That is a noble provision and yet that is not entirely satisfactory, for it is more or less embarrassing to the recipient. What the minister needs is not charity but justice; with justice he can provide for his own old age.

4. What the Minister's Salary Ought to Be

What kind of salary ought ministers to receive? Many have never considered that question. That can be determined only by considering what is expected or demanded of a minister. He certainly ought to be paid on a basis that will enable him to support his family decently, that will enable him to

make his work a success ; and that will enable him to lay by something for old age. The minister has as much right to something for old age as any man living. If he is willing to live on a moderate income all his life he ought to be allowed to escape the poorhouse when he is old, or galling poverty at home, or the humiliation of asking for a pittance of charity from some church board.

The demands made on a minister are certainly not less than those made on professional and business men generally. In fact more is required of ministers today than of any other class of men in existence. The preparation is long and arduous ; the actual average of preparation for ministers is far above that of any other profession, unless it is college professors—far above the average of lawyers and doctors. In 1910, according to the report of the Commissioner of Education, one theological student in three in the United States had a college education, one law student in five and one medical student in ten and one dental student in twenty-eight. These figures doubtless represent the differences in equipment of these professions fairly well.

No man is required to do more to keep up with the world and his work than the minister if he would succeed. He must study continually. No men do more study unless it be the teachers. Preaching is a tremendous task. The preacher's only subject is the old, old story ; but it must be presented more than one hundred times annually to the same audience ; and the people demand something fresh. A liberal expenditure is required to provide the books, maga-

zines and literature needed for doing this work acceptably. Every minister should have a good library. It is not enough to have a public library in town, be it ever so good. But the country minister and many of those in towns and villages have not that much. The minister needs a library suited to his special work, and that is not found in a public library. The average minister's library is very poor. It has been the writer's privilege to examine the libraries of a few hundred of them in his lifetime. He has been shocked at what he has seen. Notwithstanding this want of equipment as high a standard of efficiency is demanded of the minister as of any man living.

The minister's salary on an average is less than that of the day labourer. But the labourer chooses the house and neighbourhood in which he shall live; he determines his own scale of expenses. But these questions for the minister are all determined by the church. It is the minister's business to stretch his salary up to the church's requirements. Many churches provide manses and figure them as so much additional salary; but manses are not an unmixed blessing. They are often so large that they become a serious tax on the minister's slender purse. Necessary furnishings and fuel bills become embarrassing. They often take bread out of the children's mouths. The demands on the social life of the minister are greater than those of any other man. He must keep himself and family on a plane with what are termed the well-to-do people in his church and community. The church demands it. The doctor,

the lawyer and the merchant are not required to do anything of the kind. They live where they please and spend what they please. Their families may go out very little, or dress poorly and it is all right; but such would not be tolerated in the minister. His income is decidedly below the average and it is therefore very difficult and often impossible for him to meet these demands. He must economize shamefully in some places and ways in order to make a pretense at keeping up with what is expected of him in outward show.

There are endless little demands made on the minister that are made on nobody else, and nobody else knows anything about them. There are many calls for help where the facts cannot be made public and where a pastor cannot decline the help. He must be a liberal giver to all sorts of things or he is dubbed stingy and loses his influence. He must attend the various church courts, presbytery, conference or association, annually or oftener. He is called on to serve on committees and to attend special conferences frequently. All these things cost money. Livery hire, street-car fare and even postage soon amount to a considerable sum. For a month, chosen at random, the writer kept account of his postage bill. Correspondence which in no way concerned himself but which was wholly in the interest of others cost two dollars and twenty-eight cents. That means twenty-seven dollars and fifty cents for the year. A good salary can be spent in little things. There is an endless number of "thank you" jobs which every pastor must do,—free services, free

trips, free lectures, free addresses for all sorts of occasions. Even those things which propose to pay his expenses generally fail to do it, because there are often expenses which the minister must meet in order to render the service but which he hesitates to report as an item of expense; and if he did so report pay would often be refused. The people have no idea of the number of times and the various ways in which a minister is imposed upon.

Recently a Western church, with a membership of over two hundred and fifty people, and well-to-do, asked a minister to hold for them an evangelistic meeting of some weeks for which "expenses" were offered. Now, in any other line of business on earth who but a church would have proposed such a thing, and who but a minister would accept such an offer? Shall ministers do it? They often do, and they dare not refuse many such requests.

If the workman is worthy of his hire he ought to have it; and if not the work ought to be abolished. It is heroic and Christian to serve the poor, the ignorant and the ungodly on poor pay if necessary; but when an enlightened Christian people enjoying every luxury are not willing to support the church and minister it is time to leave them unserved. There has never been a time when ministers did not gladly serve the poor for little or nothing. The world honours such service. But the world despises a man who will give his services to the rich for the privilege of barely keeping out of the poorhouse for a few years. The Master Himself warned us against

throwing the pearls of truth before swine which would only turn and rend those who did it.

Certainly no one would think that a minister's salary should be less than enough to enable him to give his undivided energies to the work, to keep himself free from unnecessary worldly care, to support himself and family in keeping with the demands of his church, enough to enable him to make a success of his work and to provide modestly for old age. Such a salary would be a great increase over the present average.

PART III

The Unity of Protestantism Offers the Only Solution

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.—*Paul.*

One is your Master, even Christ, and ye are all brethren.—*Jesus.*

But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at naught him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth.—*Paul.*

If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.—*Paul.*

Necessity—thou best of peacemakers,
As well as the surest prompter of invention.

—*Scott.*

I

THE IMPOTENCE OF A DIVIDED CHURCH

THE Protestant Church, divided as it is, stands helpless and impotent in the presence of its evils and problems and before its enemies. The weakness of the thirteen colonies before their union is a picture of the helplessness of the Church to-day. What the colonies were able to do after union is highly suggestive of what a united Church could do. Business interests everywhere are forming unions and combinations in the interest of a greater efficiency and economy of administration. It is an age of combination and unification. The government may regulate business combinations but it will probably never prevent them. It is the spirit of the age. Evil is organized and unified. The Church must unify if it is to win.

1. Powerless to Solve the Problems at Home and Abroad

The problems confronting the Church can be solved only by concerted action. The degree of it required is not possible in a divided Church. There is too much waste in friction. The necessary authority is lacking. Continued division only means enlarged interdenominational and independent work, which can never be properly coördinated.

If the problems at home could be solved by a divided Church, which we believe is not possible, the problems abroad would still demand that all waste and friction should cease and that all the Christian forces should coöperate to the limit of their ability. The Gospel must be preached to a thousand millions of heathen, to two-thirds of the human family. It must be preached in hundreds of different languages and dialects and amidst every conceivable climatic condition. Many schools, colleges, theological seminaries, hospitals and publishing houses are absolutely necessary to the success of the work; far more than can be provided by a divided Church.

Movements towards nationalism among the non-Christian nations must be guided and informed. Their growing systems of education must in some way be furnished a Christian element. All the forces revolutionizing the nations must be influenced for good and for Christ. There is no time to be lost. If these things are done the present generation must do them. Whatever yellow peril there may be, or whether there is to be a yellow peril, depends on whether Protestantism will unite to conquer the world for Christ.

2. The Necessity for Readjustment

Some men predict that Christianity has seen its best days and that science, humanitarian sentiment or something else will take its place. They expect to see our churches turned into laboratories, halls of amusement, and arenas for political, economic, and sociological discussion. But that will never be.

Religion is not something manufactured. It is real and essential. Superstition and avarice do not explain it.

But the Church is under the constant necessity of readjusting itself to the changing needs of the social order that it may continue to be the supreme medium of God's education, leadership and service among men. Its theology, instruments and methods of service require readjustment in every age. And unless the Church of to-day can in some way readjust itself so as to meet the changed conditions of the times it must cease to be a very important factor in modern life. It has always readjusted itself when necessary. In its ability to do so is seen its vitality and divinity. We believe it will continue to do so whenever the necessity arises. Jesus promised that the gates of hades should not prevail against it. We believe His promise.

We have missed our purpose if we have seemed to be pessimistic. There is no reason for pessimism. Evils are numerous enough, but there is a growing consciousness of their presence, and a wide-spread and increasing desire to be rid of them. The Church has lost its hold upon many; but the world was never so much interested in Christianity. The kingdom of God never had such power among men. But the Christianity of our day is largely divorced from the Church.

Unquestionably the type of spiritual life is being changed, and in a direction badly needed. Every change may not be for the better. There ought to be more meditation and prayer in modern religious life.

But certainly the traditional type of piety, ecstatic, ascetic, and anemic, needed a change. It spent its energies in song and prayer and occasionally in emotional outbursts. The monk shut himself up in his cloister, the traditional Christian in his church. His church was an ark, a prototype of the ancient, bearing its precious and imprisoned cargo of the righteous over the angry floods which were engulfing the world. A soul here and there might be rescued from destruction; and the Church met its responsibility in the matter if it only held out its hand to the perishing who chanced to be carried within reach by the current. But a more robust and vigorous type of piety has made its appearance; one that is not content to sing and pray and piously contemplate a future deliverance at death or some other time. It seeks deliverance here and now. It would make this wilderness of woe into a garden of roses.

Many people in the Church believe that religious faith is on the decline. As an indication of that fact they tell us of numerous growing evils which to them indicate that fact: chief among these they mention the loss of interest in the Church; the disrespect for ecclesiastical authority; the lack of intense convictions among religious people generally; the spirit of doubt which robs religious faith of its certitude; and the general indifference to religion. They mean, of course, religion of the traditional type.

This indictment of the age is based on the assumption that Christianity of the traditional type is satisfactory, and that the Church is practically what it ought to be. But nothing could be wider from the

mark. Loyalty to a denominational and sectarian Church is not loyalty to Jesus Christ; and the loss of such loyalty is great gain. Disrespect for ecclesiastical authority is but a natural reaction against the exercise and abuse of an artificial and unchristian authority; and must end in the establishment of a proper authority. The lack of intense convictions is nothing more than a loss of interest in the differences that divide sects and is, therefore, one of the most encouraging signs of the times. The lack of certitude in religious faith is due, in a large measure at least, to the inevitable readjustment through which theology must pass, more or less, in every age. Modern conditions require a larger readjustment than usual and a more wide-spread doubt naturally attends it. Readjustment is always attended with danger to faith, but such is the price of progress. The general indifference towards religion of the traditional type is but the inevitable loss of interest in an "other-worldliness" which has little concern for the present world. The world does not find the heart of Christ sufficiently manifest in the Church of Christ. These supposed evils are either inevitable "growing pains" or most wholesome tendencies.

The age has been characterized as materialistic and agnostic. Perhaps it is. But there are other movements which are deeper and profounder. It is preëminently a spiritual age. There was never so much philanthropic effort and philanthropy was never so truly spiritual. Never before were so many men and women consecrated to the work of human uplift; never were so many eager for a place to

serve; and never were such satisfactory results accomplished. There is a new cry for Christ who shall fulfill the hopes of the ages. Men everywhere demand reality, the truth, at whatever cost; and at heart that is faith. There are wide-spread and profound movements towards the view-point of Jesus. Never were so many people consecrated to His ideals, both for the individual and for society. Moral values were never so high. Men are seeking as never before to apply economically, politically and socially the principles and ideals of Jesus. Whatever is unfraternal is seen to be unchristian. It is an age of faith and not of doubt, an age of robust spirituality.

Readjustment of the Church is necessary; but attempts in that direction are not without their dangers. Some of these dangers may be seen in certain present-day tendencies. The economic side of the question may be given too much prominence; but the economic is only a part of life. Political economy neither explains all the changes that have occurred among us, nor can it provide a remedy for all our ills. When all the economic wants of men have been satisfied they are still haunted by a horrible emptiness of life.

The modern Church must be socialized. But life cannot be interpreted in terms of sociology. Man is more than a social being. Sociology can never take the place of theology. Our problems can never all be solved on a human level. Man is a spiritual being. Worship, faith in God, a spiritual vision, the life of God consciously abiding in the hearts of men, are essential elements of his highest well-being here.

There is no substitute for the Gospel. And the chief need of our day is the supremacy of a spiritual religion.

3. The Weakness of Federation

Nothing short of the unity of Protestantism can provide a remedy for the ills that afflict the Church and solve the problems which confront it.

Federation may accomplish much good, but it can never cure our evils or solve our problems. It proceeds primarily in response to the growing demand for economy of administration. This evil it can greatly relieve. But federation has at least two fatal weaknesses:

First, federation leaves sectarianism and denominationalism which are the chief sources of the evils in the case. While writers generally speak of economic waste chiefly in their arguments for unity, that is by no means the primary reason for unity. They do this because people can be made to see economic evils more easily than other evils; and they respond to these more readily. But sectarianism and denominationalism are evils in themselves. The clash between different denominations constitutes one of our social difficulties and problems. The polemic bitterness and intolerance which have been engendered in the past have been anti-social forces of the first importance; and sectarianism and denominationalism are inherently anti-social. This evil of denominationalism is being mitigated but it cannot be cured while the cause remains.

Christianity is inherently social; chief among its

extensive vocabulary of great words are love, brotherhood, and fellowship. The Church of Jesus Christ is a social institution; it has a social mission and message. Social unification is one of its functions. Nothing short of the Church's highest social service can ever bring the kingdom of God to its proper development and power. Denominationalism can never win the world for Christ. It violates the fundamental spirit of love and brotherhood and defeats the highest development of Christian character. Federation leaves the conditions out of which necessarily grow petty ideals, unholy rivalries, jealousies and more or less unworthy programmes. These things can be improved by federation, but it leaves intact the machinery for their production.

Second, federation does not and cannot have the authority of administration required to cure entirely the economic wastes, or to insure the highest efficiency of the whole forces. At present it is advisory only.

Federation was the first experiment in this country towards national unity, but it was found to be unsatisfactory. Our Constitution grew out of a desire for "a more perfect union." And federation can be nothing more than a way station in our progress towards the solution of our problems in church. As such it ought to be welcomed. But the greatest service that federation can render is to create the desire and prepare the way for unity.

Neither is the union of Protestantism sufficient; what we need is unity. The difference between union and unity is most admirably expressed by Bishop

Brewster: "Unity means oneness; union is the binding together of things that are not one. Men speak of the union of Christians; and it often means merely bringing them together as so many sticks in a cord of wood. . . . Union is outward, accidental and circumstantial. Unity is inward and essential. Union is mechanical; it is put together. Unity is vital; it is the oneness of a common life wherein the parts grow together."[1]

It is not supposed that the unity of Protestantism will in itself remedy all the evils of the present situation, or that it will necessarily solve all our problems; but rather that these things can never be accomplished without unity. Unity would be a long step in the direction of a solution; it would provide a condition which would make solution possible. But a unified Church would not be a perfect Church. Religion is human and it must be imperfect in its earthly manifestations.

4. Church Entitled to the Coöperation of All

Many people, conscious of the fact that the Church is out of touch with the times, have become indifferent towards it. Some have left it or remain only nominally in it. Many refuse to join or cooperate with it; they often feel that they would be out of harmony if they should do so.

Many of these are among the best Christian people in the country. They find no satisfactory pro-

[1] "The Catholic Ideal of the Church," Chauncey B. Brewster, D. D., p. 28.

gramme in the Church. They have no interest in much of the traditional theology. They are interested in social uplift. They work in the settlements, the associated charities and in the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. They may be found doing real service in many places, but they are not in the Church.

In this way the Church is losing the sympathy and service that many good men and women could render. And such people lose an opportunity and a blessing. They ought to put themselves where their influence could be made to count for the most. The Church naturally looks with suspicion on criticisms and suggestions from those without. Friendly criticism only is valuable and the Church questions the presence of that element in the criticisms of those who have not enough interest in the work to come inside and help. The large body of men and women who are genuinely Christian but who hold themselves aloof from the Church could, inside the Church, do a great work in making the Church what it ought to be. They are generally in sympathy with all that is best. "It is not the Church that is wrong," says Miss Jane Addams, "but its methods: these must be changed to meet the demands of new conditions. We must get at the people's needs if we get at their hearts." The outside saints could change its methods if they were inside.

Jesus found the Jewish Church in need of readjustment, both in its theology and methods. There was large room for criticism. He did not hesitate to make it. But He did not fail to identify Himself

with it, though doubtless He found little in harmony with His ideals. But it was His Father's house. About it clustered the sacred associations and memories of His people. It had a large place in their affections. It had the machinery for great things if only it could be properly directed. And so it is with the modern Church.

It is not necessary to wait for unity. That must necessarily be in the distance. There is much to be done in the wilderness preparing the way for the Lord. Readjustment is already in progress. It must necessarily proceed slowly. It could not be permanent unless it did. And the Church is entitled to the intelligent and earnest coöperation of all who are interested in whatever pertains to human betterment.

II

THE POWER OF A UNIFIED CHURCH

THE unity of Protestantism would give to the Church enlarged possibilities everywhere: international coöperation in foreign missions would become a possibility; waste in denominational machinery would be eliminated; struggling churches and institutions would be consolidated; the fewer churches required would be crowded and provided with more attractive music and better sermons; friction and wasteful competition would be eliminated; the Church would have a decided advantage in the larger social service upon which it must enter; adequate moral training could be provided for students in state educational institutions; larger ideals and a heroic programme would influence for good the quality of Christian life; a better influence would be exerted on the outside world; the poor could be adequately provided for; a special order of preachers and a division of labour in the ministry would be made possible; adequate support could be provided ministers, and the poverty and charity of old age be avoided; all the embarrassing features of present conditions would be greatly improved; the question of ministerial supply would be solved, candidates for the ministry would be increased because a worthier work would be offered them; and many other desirable things would be accomplished, not the

least among which would be to free ministers, loyal to Jesus Christ, from the embarrassments of creed-subscription in non-essentials.

1. The Revision of Seminary Training

The minister is a primary factor in any possible progress of the Church. Progress is by no means dependent upon him; but he may greatly hinder or help it. For that reason his training is highly important.

At present, whether young men are preparing for mission work, home or foreign, the pastorate in the city, the smaller towns or the country, they are all given substantially the same course, all ground out at the same mill. Manifestly there is need of revision in our theological seminaries to fit more perfectly the work which ministers are expected to do. As well expect to give all young men preparing for business or the professions one common course and leave them to enter medicine, law, dentistry or business as they may choose later, as to expect that one common course will fit all young men preparing for the ministry for the particular work which later they may enter. Slight supplementary courses are not sufficient. The length of the course can hardly be increased. There must be elimination or a larger liberty in electives. A large part of what students are now forced to take in the average seminary is worth little or nothing in the pastorate. Hebrew and Greek are worth little to the average pastor. Some men may study them profitably, but many have no linguistic tastes or abilities. Why should they be forced to take them? Verbal inspiration is

no longer believed. Bible study is not now so much a study of words; modern methods of interpretation are on broader lines than formerly. The average pastor has no time to keep up his languages if he had the scholarship. The average seminary graduate, if he would get back to the original, must take what scholars tell him in English. He can take what they say without his little knowledge of the original. Especially is this true when his time in the seminary can be so much more profitably spent in other lines of work.

While a minister's duties are manifold there are none so important as preaching. Most of his duties may be performed by other consecrated workers, but not the preaching.

If he is to reach the men of to-day he must deliver a message that appeals to the modern man. The dogmatic method in theology, with its complete and consistent system of doctrines, served a good purpose in its day. But that day is gone. Such systems were built by deduction. "Deductive logic," says Henry Van Dyke, "is just as strong as it ever was, but somehow or other men are not as much impressed by it. Induction is the method of to-day; and that is a subtle, evasive, mobile method. It cannot be shut in by a ring of fortresses. Already the dogmatic systems in which the inductive method is ignored or subordinated (whether made long ago, or constructed yesterday on ancient models) are out of date." [1]

[1] "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt," Henry Van Dyke, D. D., p. 51.

The modern minister, therefore, must have a modern theology; modern in its construction and dress, but apostolic in its content. We recognize the danger of being misunderstood. We are not pleading for the latest word of higher criticism or German rationalism, but for a theology built on modern methods, expressed in terms of modern thinking, and a theology with Christ at its centre.

Jesus Christ was everything to the apostles. "It was the manifestation of Christ that converted them, the love of Christ that constrained them, the power of Christ that impelled them. He was their certainty and their strength. He was their peace and their hope. For Christ they laboured and suffered; in Christ they gloried; for Christ's sake they lived and died. They felt and they declared that the life that was in them was His life. They were confident that they could do all things through Christ which strengthened them. The offices of the Church . . . were simply forms of service to Him as Master; the doctrines of the Church were simply unfoldings of what she had received from Him as Teacher; the worship of the Church, as distinguished from that of the Jewish synagogue and the heathen temple, was the adoration of Christ as Lord." [1] The place given Jesus Christ in the early Church was the secret of its influence over the world.

Whether the minister has a finished and systematic theology when he leaves the seminary makes little difference. The apostles did not have it. Moody

[1] "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt," Henry Van Dyke, D. D., p. 63.

did not have it. But they preached with power. Many of the most powerful ministers the world ever had did not have it. The secret of this power should be found and restored to the ministry.

Revivalism has a place in the work of the modern Church; the evangelist has a place, but it ought to be chiefly in unsupplied fields. The minister ought not to be expected to do everything; he ought to be a specialist. And yet there are a few things which every minister ought to do. Every minister ought to be able to do the work of an evangelist. All cannot be equally successful, but all can do something. In the Disciples' church such is the case. But many ministers think they cannot hold evangelistic meetings. So long as they think so they cannot; but they do themselves an injustice to think so. No special or exceptional abilities are required; only consecration and faith. The Lord can use any man whom He calls. If a minister cannot work for souls what can he do? Is the ministry the place for him? Has he not answered the wrong call?

The pastor who does not hold his own meetings loses an opportunity to do some of his best work; he loses his best opportunity to endear himself to his people and thereby increase his power for good. If it is the rule to send for evangelists for revival services the people are cultivated to expect no results among the unsaved from the pastor's labours; and to that extent he is discredited in his own field. Who is better fitted to lead a congregation and direct their energies in a religious awakening, the pastor who knows them, their difficulties and needs, or a

stranger who does not? There may be times when it would be wise to bring in an outsider but they ought to be rare. If the pastor cannot do such work the Church ought to provide a pastor who can.

The careless and often reckless use made of the fear motive is an objection to much professional evangelistic work. There is much less of it now than formerly, but it is too common yet. There is a future retribution but the doctrine may be used recklessly. To many it is easy to preach, no very special preparation being required. With an authoritativeness that allows no question, a knowledge bordering on conceit, and a determination that brooks no opposition, everybody who in the least degree falls short of some self-erected standard is often consigned to the regions of endless pain. This is often done with a shocking complacency. But there are many things about the great beyond that none of us know. One of the greatest surprises in heaven, doubtless, will be the presence of many who were supposed to miss it.

Powerful agents ought to be confined to the hands of the skillful. Strychnine and nitro-glycerine are powerful agents; they are very valuable remedies; but they are dangerous in any but the most skillful hands. None other should be allowed to administer them. So with the doctrine of future retribution. The minister who can perfunctorily preach such a doctrine is out of his place in the ministry. No man should preach the doctrine of future retribution whose sympathies do not put tears in his eyes, or at least in his voice. These should be so

self-evident that there could be no mistaking their presence.

The seminaries ought to give to the Church an evangelistic ministry.

The minister is a prophet; he is a man with a message and he must be evangelistic. But the modern minister must be more. He must be a promoter, a man of affairs. He must be trained to bring things to pass.

Seminaries need to be more closely related to the work of the pastorate. The seminary is not a cultural but a professional or vocational school. Its work should be organized on that basis. Whatever it teaches should be related in a practical way to the minister's work. As it is his concrete duties are neglected. It is worth little to build a character which can do little or nothing. The ultimate test of a minister is what he can do.

Law and medical schools have among their teachers many men who are active in the practice of their professions; and the seminary needs practical leaders among its faculty. Many things required in a seminary course can be taught satisfactorily only by those who have achieved success in the work.

The minister needs a larger training in institutional methods. They are the methods of the future. While every community must develop its own activities according to its needs, the minister needs such training in order to insure his resourcefulness in providing such activities as are required in his community; and then to enable him to train leaders for the work. The minister needs actual experience in the

work which he is preparing to do. Text-books alone are not sufficient. "Such work," says Shailer Mathews, "as that done at the Chicago Commons, and other social settlements, as well as clinical practice as evangelists, Sunday-school workers, and pastors of small country churches should be a part of the curriculum of every theological school."[1] The "case system" is needed. This would put students into closer touch with the Church and assist in abolishing the present methods of pauperizing them. They could render service for what they received. Sociology, political economy, psychology and pedagogy are important elements in the training of the modern minister.

To the early Church God "gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."[2] Ministers were specialists in those days.

Not all ministers can be great preachers; and some are poor pastors, but do splendid work in the pulpit. The unity of Protestantism would put several pastors over many churches. One could be a specialist in young people's work and another in the Sunday-school. Another could be the pastor. He could carry cheer to the sick and shut-ins and plant new hope in the hearts of the discouraged by his personal ministration. Whether these ministers

[1] "The Church and the Changing Order," Shailer Mathews, p. 236.

[2] Eph. iv. 11–12.

would preach to the regular church or not would make little difference, for another would be the preacher. He could be much alone with God and his library. All modern institutions except the Church employ specialists. The jack-at-all-trades can find employment only in the modern Church. It is the work of the theological seminary to train specialists for all these varied activities.

Ministers serving as pastors alone often become discouraged because they are only human. Jesus sent His disciples two and two. He had a reason for it. The reason is not far to seek; where two or more work together they become a great support and comfort to each other, criticize each other and supply each other's deficiencies. None but a minister can fully enter into sympathy with a minister.

Many seminaries are moving in the direction of saner method of training for young men. Most seminaries, perhaps, have made some slight efforts at readjustment. But efforts in that direction are wholly inadequate. If proper methods are to be used in the training of theological students seminaries must be located where there is a field for the work required. An equipment is necessary which a divided Church would find it difficult, if not impossible, to provide.

An interesting experiment in theological schools is being inaugurated in Nashville. It is called the American Inter-church College for Religious and Social Workers. It proposes to prepare trained leaders, men and women, to meet the needs of the modern world. Vanderbilt University and Peabody

College, two well-equipped institutions, are located there. This new college has a campus abutting on both. The three institutions become a unit in the proposed work. "The work is made big enough to enlist the coöperative support of all the Protestant denominations, so that each may conduct its special denominational training in connection with a scientifically equipped institution, the general courses of which are maintained unitedly. . . . Five denominations and the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations go in for the college."

"The inter-church college is to prepare men and women for the new forms of social service and Christian ministry, Bible teachers, city missionaries, evangelistic workers, missionaries to the immigrants, the mountaineers, the miners and mill workers; deaconesses, charity workers, Sunday-school experts, church musicians, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association secretaries, and general social service workers. . . . In another part of Nashville, a similar school for negro Christian workers will be maintained." [1]

Such as desire are expected to build their denominational dormitories and such other buildings as are needed for each particular denomination, where proper instruction may be given in denominational matters and where all may have the larger advantages of the combined institutions. This seems to be a step in the right direction; and the outcome of this experiment will be watched with interest.

[1] William T. Ellis, "The South Revealing Her Best Self," in *The Continent*, February 24, 1912.

2. Providing the Conditions of Ministerial Success

The minister must not be denied the necessary conditions of success in his work. Three things are very important in this connection: residence among his parishioners, lengthened pastorates and an adequate salary.

One of the primary needs of the country church is a resident ministry. Few churches have such now. An occasional sermon, even by an apostle Paul, will not solve the country problem. Extensive and intensive cultivation of the field during the week is necessary to give proper potency to the pulpit on Sunday. A pastor ministering daily to the needs of his people can do more good in the six days in the week than is possible on any Sabbath day. A non-resident minister can never be a leader among his people, and leadership is the great need of the country.

The first condition of a resident ministry in the country is a ministry that loves the country and is willing to remain in it. So long as the country minister is anxiously looking for a release from what he accepts only because he must, there can never be a country ministry of the type that is needed. "Too often at present," says H. L. Butterfield, "the rural parish is regarded either as a convenient laboratory for the clerical novice, or as an asylum for the decrepit or inefficient."

And one of the first steps necessary in the creation of such a ministry is a change of that sentiment which now discredits in a measure the minister who

serves in the country. To preach to a strong church in a large town or city is thought to make big preachers, and such fields are coveted for the opportunity and prestige they give. The average minister is not to be blamed, under existing circumstances, for disliking the country pastorate. There is too much ground for discrimination against the country church. The stronger churches in the towns and the cities, cursed by sectarianism as they are, offer a field poor enough for vigorous young men, and the country church of to-day offers a less attractive field from every standpoint.

The first step in changing the sentiment against the country church is to make the country church a desirable field, one that offers ample opportunity for service and accomplishment. No field on earth can offer a better opportunity for strong young men than a unified country church. And if the field was made an opportunity for the highest service young men would not hesitate to spend their lives in the work.

Now, if the minister is to like his work in the country and be content to remain with it, if he is to become a leader in the country, he must be trained for that special field and with the idea that he will spend his life in it. He ought never to think of any other field. He ought to be so well fitted for that field that he would thereby be unfitted for any other. Men accept missions as a life-work and are satisfied to do it. In some way the country minister's education must be such as will enable him to be satisfied in the country.

One of the great services rendered by President Roosevelt was the appointment of a Commission on Country Life. This Commission in its report suggested that "ministerial colleges and theological seminaries should unite with agricultural colleges in the preparation of the country clergyman." The country church of the future is bound up with better farming. Why should not the Church promote it? The country farmer must be educated in the best methods of modern farming and he often distrusts theorists and outsiders. But the Church with proper leaders can reach him. The Church has always contributed more or less to the relief of poverty, but it can better assist in its cure. The modern system of farm tenantry and the robbing of the soil of its fertility are among the chief causes of poverty in the country. And such leadership among farmers will prepare the way for a higher service.

The Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst offers a summer course [1] that looks towards the preparation of the minister for country work. A splendid beginning is made here. The Presbyterian Church, North, has taken a very advanced step in this direction also through its Department of Church and Country Life. Several summer schools [2] for the special training of country ministers and other

[1] Information regarding this work can be had by addressing the Massachusetts Federation of Churches, 728 Tremont Temple, Boston.

[2] Information may be had by addressing Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Superintendent of the Department of Church and Country Life, 156 Fifth Ave., New York.

church workers have been held. The work as yet is only in its infancy, but promises much for the future.

The average pastorate is too short to accomplish satisfactory results. The foundations only can be laid in three years. The pastor who must move every few years can never bring his work to fruitage; and one man cannot very well build on another's foundation. The erroneous standards which now require such frequent changes ought to be abolished.

There are misfits in the ministry. Some men ought never to have entered it. And the best men do not fit equally well into every community. Such misfits cannot be changed too soon. But it is no discredit to a minister that he is not adapted to a particular field. It means only that no man is infinite in his abilities and adaptabilities.

If the restlessness of the ministry is ever cured an adequate salary must be provided. But this can easily be done with proper consolidation and co-operation. The proper ecclesiastical court can fix a minimum salary. Elimination of waste in home mission work will leave a large fund which may be used, where necessary, to bring salaries up to the minimum.

With only so many churches as are needed in any given community the question of finance will present little difficulty. Especially will this be true where the church makes itself indispensable to the whole people. A church that will not interest itself in the problems of humanity cannot expect humanity to interest itself in such a church. A religion which cannot teach people how to live on earth is to be

distrusted when it would presume to teach the way to heaven.

The idea of a patronizing charity must be overcome. Church support must be raised above the idea of benevolence. This can be done by giving the people a visible basis for teaching that they ought to pay the Lord what they owe Him.

The Du Page Church [1] near Chicago is a splendid example of what may be done in this direction. This is a country church. A new church-home, costing $10,000, was dedicated two or three years ago. The church had served the whole community so well that everybody contributed to the new building—"Protestants, German Lutherans, Catholics, and men of no church." All assisted in hauling the materials. Within ten years the membership of this church more than doubled, and the Sunday-school trebled. The pastor's salary was increased forty per cent. within that time. Benevolences for the decade amounted to $5,270 against $6,407 for the fifty years preceding. In addition to these things the manse was repaired; and other repairs on the old church were made. The ten years' work along modern lines in this community has been productive of no greater results than may be had in other communities.

3. Reconstructing the Public Services

The Sunday-school and young peoples' societies, as conducted to-day, are entirely unsatisfactory. Their

[1] "Ten Years in a Country Church," Matthew B. McNutt, in the *World's Work*, December, 1910. This is a splendid story of the possibilities of the country pastorate.

result undoubtedly is to create children's and young people's churches separate from the regular. This would not be objectionable, perhaps, if the new churches thus created could do the work of the regular church. But they do not and cannot. Some reconstruction which avoids these evils is necessary.

There is no possible substitute for the regular services of the sanctuary where the Gospel is preached. The loss to the children and youth who do not attend this service is incalculable. If habits of church attendance are not formed early they will probably never be formed. It is a well-known fact that many children and young people soon graduate from the Sunday-school. The young people's society does not hold its members long. Graduates from both institutions soon lose their religious interests. The present method of separate services for children and young people is systematically and unconsciously educating them out of church attendance. The church needs nothing to-day more than it needs the presence of the whole family at its regular services.

The children are the hope of the church. In more primitive times they attended the regular services more largely than now. The problem of the church is the problem of the children and youth. A failure here is the most disastrous of all failures. The chief glory of the Catholic Church is its success with the children and youth. Whatever else they may have their children attend the regular services. But for that fact Catholicism would disintegrate in a free country like ours.

The Sunday-school ought to be combined with the

regular morning service. If deemed best some part or all of the kindergarten and primary departments might be excused from the entire service. This would put the children, except the youngest, and youth under the influence of the preaching of the Word. The young people's services ought also to be combined with the morning or evening service.

The modern church is unduly burdened with services. Two preaching services, the Sunday-school, the young people's meeting and a junior service, at least, are thought to be necessary wherever possible. But the preparation of two sermons in one week, with his other duties, is rather trying on a minister. It is rather a heavy drain to preach them. The majority of pastors have more or less responsibility in Sunday-school. A man cannot be his best in each of two sermons in one day; one must necessarily be mediocre, perhaps both. A unified church with more than one pastor over a congregation might obviate this difficulty. But is there not danger of surfeiting the people with preaching? Is not the growing demand for the sermonette a logical result of the present situation? Would not one great service on Sunday morning be ample? Would it not be better, in fact, than several with energies divided? Personally we are inclined to the ideal of one great Sunday morning service as sufficient. In this one great service of the day a place could be found for both the Sunday-school and young people's department. What the church needs is fewer services and more service. If God could be served only with song and prayer the number of services

would be more important. If every energy was bent in preparation for one great service, and the people were then left to their families and friends, or to lighter but innocent pleasures for the remainder of the day, we believe it would be better. With our present methods many people are expected to attend several services on Sunday, often four or five. Such make the day a religious debauch. The reaction must come and it is always hurtful.

The most powerful argument possible for an evening service is that certain people cannot attend in the morning. This may be sufficient reason for its continuance. But if the evening service is to be continued it ought to be reconstructed in some way so as to attract an audience large enough to justify the effort. It is very doubtful whether such is the case now. The young people's service might be merged into it. It might be made more musical. If the Sunday evening service was followed with a social hour in the parlours of the church, to which all were invited, and where light refreshments were served free, it might be made a great power for good.

Doubtless many would be shocked at the idea of surrendering the service, but it would be chiefly those who do not attend. It might be well to remember that Sunday evening was not considered sacred at all by our Puritan forefathers and that Saturday evening, although sacred to them, was spent quietly at home with their families or with their neighbours. They prospered religiously without an evening service.

The prayer-meeting has been called "the thermometer of the church." Many would gauge the

spirituality of the church by it. But the modern mid-week service has a very small place in the modern church. It serves only a very few people, chiefly the elderly. Most of them come from a sense of duty. A service which does not appeal to a larger number of Christian men and women fails to justify its existence.

Unless it is reconstructed it will die of neglect. Social features might be added to advantage. Better still, it might be made a meeting where the problems of general community betterment were discussed. The facts relative to general conditions must be given to the people somewhere. The pulpit is not the place. Publicity is an essential feature of success. Intelligent constructive work is not possible without it. It is not sufficient for a committee of workers to know conditions and needs. The moral backing of the community is necessary. This cannot be had without a public knowledge of conditions and possible remedies. This meeting could supply this need.

It is well to remember that the prayer-meeting is of recent origin. It was introduced into the colonies not till the middle of the eighteenth century. The clergy opposed its introduction then. Christianity is not now, nor has it ever been, dependent upon a mid-week service of the traditional type.

4. The Highest Possible Coöperation

The highest possible coöperation in every department of activity would become possible in a unified Church. By no other means can our problems be solved. There can be no coöperation among antago-

nistic elements, not until there is at least an established toleration. But the highest coöperation is impossible without at least two things: consciousness of kind, and a common interest in the objects sought. Denominationalism does not and cannot have either of these things. But unity would furnish both.

Consolidation and coöperation in home missions would eliminate the present waste in that work. And the saving of both men and money would enable the Church to enter the many unoccupied fields. Christian colleges might, in many instances, be consolidated. Fewer and better equipped institutions could do vastly better work. Small colleges have certain advantages, but they may be too small. And whether large or small they require first-class equipment which many of them cannot claim now. What could be done in the direction of consolidation would depend in a large measure, perhaps, on the terms of bequests. The unity of the Church at home and abroad would greatly increase the efficiency of the working forces everywhere without the addition of a man to the force or a dollar to the treasury. Coöperation in foreign missions would revolutionize that work. It would mean coöperation in every department of the work, schools, colleges, seminaries, hospitals and publishing houses.

5. A Larger Social Service

The possibility of a larger social service[1] would be greatly enhanced.

[1] "A Social Service Program for the Parish," by the Joint Commission on Social Service in the Protestant Episcopal Church offers

The right and duty of the Church to do such work will not be called in question by those familiar with Biblical history. The ancient prophets preached not an individual but a public and social morality. Under the figure of a vine, a virgin, or a city they recognized the organic social life of their nation. They dealt with it as a social unity. Their interests were in public affairs. Many of them were statesmen of the highest order. They cherished a large ideal for the final perfection of their people. These men were utterly indifferent to the ceremonial side of religious life; but they cherished a passionate enthusiasm for moral righteousness and social justice.

The burden of the preaching of Jesus was the kingdom of God. His moral instructions, His parables and the prophetic element of His teaching all centred in the kingdom. This kingdom was to come without observation, as a growth, and not by catastrophe. It was like the seed sown which grew slowly and silently, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."[1] The object of this kingdom was the transformation of human society, and to that end it proposed a regeneration of all human relations, bringing them into harmony with the will of God.

the best thing we have seen. It recognizes two types of community: the industrial, with its concentration of population around the factory; and the agricultural, with its segregation of population. Rev. F. M. Crouch, 157 Montague Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., is secretary.

[1] Mark iv. 28.

Jesus would extend His kingdom by a new type of life among men; and He Himself incarnated that new type. Every individual He could win to such a life would advance His kingdom. "He knew that a new view of life would have to be implanted before the new life could be lived; and that the new society would have to nucleate around personal centres of renewal. But His end was not the new soul, but the new society; not man, but Man."[1] The hope of His kingdom was a social hope and involved the whole social life of man. What Jesus proposed was not so much a matter of preparation for heaven as the transformation of life on earth into harmony with heaven.

But this idea of the kingdom was soon lost in the Church. The elements of it remaining were found in the millennial hope which survived. And it is only within recent years that His kingdom has been re-discovered.

The great commission defines the sphere of the Church. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"[2] is only one part of that commission. Many people consider that the whole of it. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" completes it. Jesus said many things concerning the laws which are to govern men in all their varied relations. The principles of Jesus are to be applied in

[1] "Christianity and the Social Crisis," Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 60–61.

[2] Matt. xxviii. 19–20.

every sphere of life. There is no limit. The Church must enlarge her conception of salvation and service. Jesus came that men might have a larger and nobler life here. And a man saved from selfishness, animalism and other evils which destroy manhood here will be saved hereafter.

Men are the products of three factors: the will, heredity and environment. And these three factors must be considered in dealing with them. In the past Christianity has addressed itself to the first of these and has neglected the others. The will is primary, but heredity and environment are profoundly important. The Church must no longer neglect any fundamental factor in the building of human character. The Church must interest itself in the whole life of the people. Nothing that concerns the welfare of men and women is alien to the Church. "We have no doubt," says Josiah Strong, "that our religion can fit men for heaven, but can it fit men for earth? That is the burning question which the Church is summoned to answer." In its efforts at human betterment the Church must align itself with no class against another; it must stand for the highest service of the whole people. "When Henry George once faced a great mass meeting of working men in Cooper Union, New York, he was introduced as 'the friend of the working man.' He promptly rose to his feet and declared, 'I am not the friend of the working man.' And there was a silence of consternation among the professional politicians and campaign managers. Then he added, 'I am not the friend of the capitalist.'

And there was a relaxing of the tension. But still the audience waited for the final word, and it came, the word of a prophet of righteousness and a friend of humanity: 'I am for men; men simply as men, regardless of any accidental or superficial distinctions of race, class, colour, creed or yet of functions or position!' And the whole assembly broke into thunderous applause. That is the spirit of the democracy of the kingdom. That is the true attitude of the Christian minister and of the Christian Church towards divergent social interests and the distinctions and divisions they have created."[1]

A step preliminary to the highest social service is that of a survey of conditions. Lack of knowledge constitutes one of our greatest problems. This is true in every department of the Church's possible activity. Fragmentary and unrelated surveys are not sufficient. Every community, country, village, town or city must know its conditions in order to know its problems and their solution. The surveys made by single organizations, or for propagandist purposes, are not satisfactory. They may possess value, but not the highest value. Propagandists are too easily tempted to omit certain facts and to arrange others for the purpose of making the best possible showing, or of proving a point. The entire situation must be known; the whole truth must be told. Every interest is tied up with every other, and the Church must interest itself in everything that means the betterment of human lives.

[1] Rt. Rev. Charles D. Williams, D. D., in "The Democracy of the Kingdom," Bulletin No. 12, p. 18, Unitarian Association, Boston.

The scientific method must prevail in the making of all surveys.

The Church alone cannot undertake the whole task of social service; but a divided Church cannot do what it ought to do. It must coöperate with all others whom it can inspire to the work. The Church's chief service is to furnish leadership and inspiration. And who is so well qualified among men to assume this leadership as ministers? Their sympathy with all classes of men, their contact with the rich and the poor, and their consecration to an unselfish work all conspire to give them peculiar fitness for this leadership.

A unified Protestantism would become the most powerful force in society for good. Christianity could far more profoundly influence the leadership of all the affairs of the social, political and business life of the country. The ethics and fraternity of Christianity could be woven into the warp and woof of our political, industrial and social systems. All political parties would court favour. To-day the Church is laughed at as a practically negligible quantity, while the saloon vote is bargained for. We would have no more members of the President's cabinet presiding at beer exhibits.

6. Adequate Provision for the Poor

The early Church was a poor man's Church. One mark of the Messiah's coming was that the Gospel should be preached to them. The early Church boasted its relation to the poor and profited by it. The first ecclesiastical act of the Church of Jerusalem

was the appointment of seven men, whose business was to be that of caring for them. In those days ample provisions were made for the poor. And it is a most grievous reproach that members of the Church of God must be forced on the state or outside charity for support. This work of charity has to a very large extent been given over to the state and to independent organizations. This is a great loss to the Church. It is not better, as some have insisted, for the Church to inspire others to do this work. That is better than that the work be not done; but it is best for the Church to do this work.[1] The Church has surrendered too many of her vital functions and for that reason she is out of touch with the times and finds the masses alienated.

The primary need of the poor is always spiritual. This need cannot be provided by the state; and is poorly provided by others independently. The Church can make its charity the means of something higher. The most needy are overlooked by the state always, serving only those who seek aid. The Church can search them out and the most worthy and deserving can often be found in no other way. So long as the Church neglects the relief of the poor it is looked upon as allied with the well-to-do and the rich. This work was one of the elements of strength in the early Church and would greatly add to the strength of the Church to-day. And the results would be far more satisfactory on the recipient of aid.

State charity always pauperizes the people; pauper-

[1] "The Christian Pastor," Washington Gladden, D. D., has a splendid discussion of this subject, pp. 448–475.

ism is a direct and inevitable result of state aid. Those familiar with English history need no other example. What was enacted in England is reënacted always whenever the state does such work. The needy accept aid from the state ; they are humiliated at first. Human nature seeks to justify itself in whatever it does. Having accepted aid the recipient seeks to justify himself. His need is not entirely sufficient to do it. But justification is not hard to find, however. He recalls the fact that what he received was in accordance with the law, and a law that had been passed for the special benefit of such as himself. He received no more than what the law provided for. He remembers that rich men take advantage of every law in their favour and he feels that if the rich may do so, he may do so also. And the biggest paupers in this country are the rich who pile up millions as a result of legislation that enables them to plunder the poor ; we are not accustomed to calling them paupers, however. Every matured and able-bodied man who lives on what he does not earn, who renders not to the world a service equivalent to his expenditures, whether he be rich or poor, is a pauper. Many do so and insist that it is their right. The poor man comes to feel that the law provides for him and that he has a right to demand it. After reaching that conclusion he is ever afterwards seeking all the state aid he can get as his right—a pauper.

Now, Christian charity judiciously administered and administered in the spirit of the Master has no such effect. It comes not as a matter of law but of grace and Christian brotherhood. Men receive

Christian charity in tears; but nobody ever saw tears shed when the state gave assistance. Christian charity is calculated to awaken the noblest that is in man; and it is not uncommon for it to prove the means of permanent reformation. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." The remedy that makes friends out of the enemies of men will make friends out of the enemies of the Master. Christian charity properly administered is certainly far less likely to make paupers than state aid. The recipient has no further claim on you after he has been assisted, except the claims of brotherhood. If he is in need again and is assisted it comes again as a matter of grace. Relief of the poor and sick furnishes the Church the finest possible evangelistic opening. Medical missions are an example of what ministering to the physical man can be made to mean.

In 1877 the Charity Organization of Buffalo, N. Y., was founded, the first in America. In 1896 it began what is known as the church district plan. This is widely known as the "Buffalo plan" and is the most satisfactory plan in operation for the relief of the poor by the Church in its present divided condition. It is a plan, however, that would fit into a unified Church. The whole city is districted and individual churches become responsible for certain districts. If a church cannot become responsible for a whole district it may become an assisting church and do what it can. This work has enjoyed such a splendid success that the district rules are here given:

"1. A church which accepts a church district agrees to supply a satisfactory visitor for each family referred to it by the charity organization society within ten days from the time the reference is received. The church should understand that the reference is not for a temporary crisis only, but involves continuous oversight, perhaps for a long time, preferably by the same visitor, if good work is being done, without regard to changes in church committees. It is understood that the coöperating church accepts the direction of the appropriate district committee of the society and that its visitor or visitors will attend and report to it at its meetings; and it is further understood that the church agrees not to give money or supplies to families referred by the society for visitation only, without the approval of this committee. The church undertakes to become responsible for the material relief of families referred to it as far as it is able.

"2. The charity organization society agrees to refer to such church committees only families living within the district taken, unless they are already connected with the church; and the society further agrees that when a family has another church connection it will attempt first to obtain a satisfactory visitor from that church.

"3. The church agrees to accept the care of neglected families living in its district, no matter of what religious faith, when requested by the society, or to give to the society satisfactory reasons for not doing so.

"4. The society will not constitute any territory a church district in which there is a burden for the

church of less than five families. Either the society or the church can terminate the district relation at any time by formal notice in writing.

"5. An assisting church has no district boundaries, but agrees to supply visitors for families referred to it by the charity organization society in all other respects as provided above, except that the church will not undertake to become responsible for the care of more than five families from the society at any one time."

The work is coördinated and directed by the general organization. It seeks to administer charity in the most approved methods. It has done great things in the prevention and cure of pauperism in the city.

Relief of temporary suffering is the least that can be done for the poor. Indiscriminate almsgiving is a curse instead of a blessing. The chief end of such work is to render aid unnecessary. This can be done by measures preventive and curative. And unless charity is so administered it is unworthy the name. What the poor need most is sympathy, friendship and stimulating lessons in self-help. The Church can give it. "No more important field of labour," says Newman Smyth, "is open to the working Church; none in which greater wisdom or a more genuine love for souls is needed; none in which the Church can do more to help in answering its prayer for the coming of the kingdom of heaven."

7. Amusement and Recreation

The historic attitude of the Church towards amusements has been very unfortunate. Doubtless it is

partly traditional and came from the early attitude of Christians to the games and amusements of the Roman Empire. The sports of that day were horrible and in opposing them the Church was betrayed into opposition to all amusements.

The body and mind are incapable of continuous effort. God has implanted in every man and woman a strong desire and necessity for amusement and recreation. It is a need not of man's lowest, but of his highest nature—the spirit. He who thus formed man did not intend to doom him to a life of monotony. Man was made to enjoy as well as to labour and it is folly to fight against nature.

In the organization of modern social and industrial life amusement and recreation must have a larger place than ever before. Nature has always demanded a large place for these things; but the modern strenuous life of all classes, the leisure of the well-to-do, and the unemployed hours of the many, all demand it as never before. Especially is this true of those living in towns and cities. Modern invention has lessened home duties until the average young people have nothing to do outside of school hours. Idle time must be innocently employed. The work men once did is now done largely by machines and there is a large margin beyond working hours after an eight hour day. Occupations are now largely one-sided. Many things men do require the exercise of but a small part of their faculties or powers. The rest of their minds and bodies are left to deteriorate through lack of use. Proper recreations are required to overcome this one-sidedness.

The fact that living under the conditions of forty years ago people did not have extensive means for amusement and recreation does not argue that they are not needed now.

Especially is it important that proper amusement and recreation be provided for the neglected poor. Nothing would do more to better the condition of such people who now so largely seek relief from weariness and trouble in indulgences that merely serve to drag them down lower. The working man is most exposed to the curse of intemperance because he has so few pleasures. If he were given the pleasures of a man he would not care so much for those of the brute.

There is a very close connection between amusements and morals. The Church has always recognized that fact. But it has only recognized half the truth, that is, that amusements have their evil side. They also have great possibilities for good. The Church, recognizing only the possibilities for evil, has endeavoured to meet its responsibilities by condemning most means at the command of young people for the gratification of their God-given instincts for pleasure.

The dance, cards and the theatre have generally been condemned by the Church and not without good reason. But it has proved to be a case where prohibition does not prohibit. That policy has utterly failed. The Church has made no effort to provide something which will take the place of these things. To condemn a thing is always easier than to purify or to provide substitutes.

These things have been found to gratify an ineradicable instinct of human nature. They are often made a power for evil. But may not the evils be eliminated without surrendering the legitimate pleasures which they give? If so it ought to be done; if not, satisfactory substitutes ought to be provided. It is the business of Christianity to transform all human life. Christ has redeemed the whole world, with its industries, arts, pleasures and social institutions. And it is the business of the Church to sanctify all these things.

There is nothing more fascinating to multitudes than dancing. The instinct seems to be natural and almost universal. The dramatic instinct cannot be crushed out. The theatre is undoubtedly a great power for evil. And yet it may be made one of the greatest possible powers for good. The attitude of the Church and ministry towards these things ought to be one of discriminating sympathy. Wholesale condemnation does harm. The judgment of those who do so is distrusted on other matters. The grounds on which some amusements are condemned and others allowed are often inconsistent and irrational.

One of two things the Church ought to do; it ought either to provide substitutes that satisfy the same instincts which these undoubtedly gratify, or these amusements ought to be renovated and furnished the people under the best possible influences. Hurling anathemas against those who enjoy these things is a waste of energy because the people will have them until some satisfactory substitute is provided.

The Church must provide for the social and recreational life of the people. One of its greatest sins has been its neglect to do so. The day when piety and paleness were synonyms has gone. Christianity is not a set of rules; neither is it a system of negative conduct. It is a new life, a life that enlarges and ennobles. Many people neglect the spiritual side of their natures, which is always very unfortunate. But it is also important to provide for the social. The spiritual cannot be adequately provided for without it.

While much effort is being made to meet the needs of various classes—efforts of fraternal orders, mutual benefit societies, personal clubs, organizations connected with the Church and by towns and cities—the whole machinery for social pleasure and recreation is utterly inadequate. A large part of what exists, especially in the cities, has been turned over to the most evil-minded and unscrupulous people in the community, whose only object is commercial gain.

There is great need of social centres for the people where they can meet as often as necessary for the gratification of the social instincts. The saloon provides such a place for men and it keeps open every moment the law allows. Music, good fires when needed, and in many instances free lunches are provided. Every possible attraction is offered. This is the strongest feature of the saloon.

Some people would make the school the social centre and not without good reason. A sectarian Church can hardly supply it. The divisions which it creates, with their clashing interests, render the

Church unsuited. Education is a universal interest and for that reason would do it better than a divided Church. But a unified Church can do it better than the school. It would have the machinery and the necessary consecrated volunteer workers already at hand. And the Church alone can properly sanctify such things.

The Church need not attempt to furnish everything a community needs. It ought to provide much and inspire more of the right kind. The disposition of any organization to assist in such matters ought to receive encouragement; and where needed co-operation ought to be given. Civic responsibility and development in this direction should be encouraged. The Church should attempt no monopoly. But it can create a public sentiment which demands amusements and recreations of the highest moral order, and it can inspire Christian people to provide what the Church cannot furnish.

All social pleasure requires proper supervision and that involves the presence and association of the best people with the young in their pleasures and recreations. And the Church ought to provide by inspiration, or otherwise, proper supervision, for the whole list of needed social pleasures.

The Sunday question deserves to be discussed in this connection. The Puritan Sabbath is gone. Nobody would have it returned. The Sabbath day ought to be one of rest; ordinary industry, as far as possible, ought to cease. This can be secured by law. The greatest problem does not lie here to-day. But when the demon of toil has been expelled and

the house is empty, swept and garnished, seven other demons, even more wicked than the first, stand ready to enter. And they will enter and take possession unless the place is filled with things desirable. To fill this place is a part of the Church's mission. Church-going alone will not do it; church services cannot monopolize the day. Nature requires a larger variety. But reform here as everywhere is by displacement. It is a waste of time to forbid certain pleasures unless satisfactory ones are offered in their stead. The Church ought to provide pleasant Sunday afternoons or evenings or both. These may consist of bright music, pictures, cheerful talks, profitable addresses, readings from the best literature, a cup of tea and a sandwich. In this direction the solution must be found. The day ought to be different from other days but innocent pleasures and helpful recreations should not be discouraged.

Sunday ought to be redeemed and the Church alone can do it. But it cannot be done by repressions and prohibitions. The Sabbath was made for man and the modern man has made up his mind to enjoy it. He ought to be furnished the legitimate means. It ought to be made a joyous day, the most joyous of the week, a day so sweet, so full of beauty and song, pictures, music and other innocent pleasures that the people would bless its Giver for every precious moment of its time and then long for its return. God is the author of child nature; Jesus declared children to be the type of the kingdom of God. And God has not imposed on men an observance of Sunday which violates the deepest instincts

of these innocents, and which makes them dread to see the day.

8. Sex Hygiene

One of the most fundamental problems demanding solution to-day is that presented by sex hygiene.[1] There is a growing consciousness and recognition of the fact that children have a right to be well born. If this is ever accomplished the unfit must be denied the responsibility of parentage. This new science of eugenics claims that the segregation of the feeble-minded and the epileptic under proper public care will prevent the reproduction of nine-tenths of the unfit.[2]

The physically and morally unfit have no right to bring into the world offspring cursed with insanity, paralysis, blindness and physical deformity and moral degeneration. Children have a right to be born with some show for happiness and with some promise of ability to contend in the struggle for existence. And the physically and morally unfit have no right to impose the burden of their necessarily imperfect offspring on an innocent public. This is the function of the state but the state needs the inspiration of the Church in the work.

The reproduction of the unfit must be eliminated and those fitted for parenthood must be educated in

[1] The American Federation of Sex Hygiene, 29 West 42nd Street, New York, is an agency for promoting efforts in this direction. Charles W. Bitwell is secretary.

[2] See "Religion in Social Action," by Graham Taylor, in *The Survey*, April 6, 1912, p. 29.

the sex relationships. The false modesty of parents seen in withholding from their children the truth concerning these relationships is productive of endless harm. Educational efforts in this direction have only just begun. It is a very delicate and difficult subject. It is undoubtedly a dangerous subject unless properly handled. But somehow the young must be educated in these matters. The vulgar method by which such knowledge is now acquired is harmful in the extreme. It would be difficult to make the situation worse. It is not enough to supply the young with literature; and whatever may be accomplished in the school is not sufficient.[1] The hearty coöperation of parents becomes a necessity. If the work is ever done it must come through the inspiration of religion. Nothing short of the stress of religious duty will lead parents to meet their responsibilities in the matter. The church must align itself with other proper agencies in this work. Through Sunday-schools, mothers' meetings and other agencies great things may be accomplished.

9. Reconstruction in Cities, Towns and Country

The church must be a place where the Word is preached, and a house of prayer. It must also become a thoroughly equipped institute of humanity.

The modern world needs an open and institutional church, the centre of beneficent philanthropic work. It is not possible in the space at our command to

[1] A series of booklets edited by Mr. Bok, of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, is to be commended. Published by Revell.

outline a plan for such work. It is not necessary. Very considerable literature on that subject already exists. And all really useful churches must be a growth and development according to the varying needs of the different times and places. Protestant churches are generally open one day in the week. Many of them cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. They accommodate a few people on Sunday, and a handful for the mid-week service. Thousands of churches do no more. If they are to render the larger service demanded in this age they must be open daily.

The unity of Protestantism would make possible all these things. The work everywhere would receive a new and powerful impetus. The work in cities would be revolutionized. A parish system would distribute churches according to the needs of the city and each parish could be cultivated like a garden. Ministers and workers would not waste their time running all over the city and nobody would be overlooked in the ministration. No place needs the church so badly as the less desirable districts of the cities. It is not enough to attempt to reach the poor, the ignorant and the vicious, with dingy missions and street preaching. These districts ought to have the most attractive churches and the best of everything. As it is we spend our money to send men to the heathen abroad, but when they come to our own cities we abandon them to the tender mercies of Providence. The amount of money now expended in city churches would probably be more than sufficient to build and to main-

tain all the churches the cities would need, and sufficient fully equipped institutional churches where they were required. Much could be done to cure the evils of our social life. The magnificent churches built for the rich never appeal to the poor and vicious. But a magnificent institutional church, open all the time and ministering to the needs of the whole man, physical, social, and intellectual, an every-hour ministry in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ, would prepare the way for the Gospel message.

Unity would revolutionize the work in the country villages and towns. Nowhere would the advantages be greater. The consolidation of the small churches in these places would greatly add to their efficiency. The country problems could then be solved. An adequate field would be afforded the strongest young men for the largest possible service. The country minister with proper training for his peculiar problems could become a leader of the forces for economic, social and religious betterment of the whole people. The church could be brought into vital touch with every human interest and thereby becoming all things to all men could win many. The small towns almost everywhere, and often the country, could easily have and maintain a church which combined all the services now rendered by the church, Young Men's Christian Associations and other organizations.

The country can have but few institutions; therefore, it is the more important that the church should be and do its best. The church ought to be the

centre of every country interest. One such is enough for any community. Near to it ought to be the school. Schools need to be consolidated and centralized. The minister and teachers ought to live at this centre. The church ought to have its Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association departments and equipment. Ample playgrounds ought to be provided—grounds for baseball and such other sports as the community required.

The children would meet there daily. The older people would come for church, for recreations and periodic gatherings, for social pleasures, concerts, musicals and whatever else was deemed necessary. These things would cultivate a community spirit without which no community's problems can be solved. The day of individualism is gone. The farmer must organize as others have done.

The country church is bound up with the country school. The school needs to revise its curriculum and provide one more suited to the needs of the children. To-day they are provided only such training as fits them for the towns and cities. Their training must be related more to their living. Fewer will desire to leave for the cities. Domestic economy and scientific farming ought to be taught. Every school ought to have a piece of land as an experiment farm. Scientific farming is the only clue to the repair of the country. This needs to be taught, not simply that farmers may increase their incomes, but that life on the farm may become more attractive.

The success of the Du Page Church, some thirty

miles from Chicago, has already been referred to. Two or three more examples of what has been accomplished in country churches might be given. The story of John Frederick Oberlin's work[1] is exceedingly interesting. He was born in 1740 and died in 1826. His parish was in the Ban-de-la-Roche, at that time a French district. He anticipated modern methods. Oberlin found his parish of six small villages destitute of roads, schools, and manufactures. Its agriculture was scarcely worth the name. Moral and religious conditions were very poor. He first established schools and provided teachers. Then he built roads, taking the lead in the work himself with pickax in hand. He organized an agricultural club and presided over it. He introduced new vegetables and taught the people their cultivation. He investigated soil conditions and provided lectures on fertilizers, irrigation and drainage. He trained carpenters, shoemakers and blacksmiths. He provided productive employment for men and women. He built a workshop and equipped it with the turning-lathe, carpenter's outfit, printing-press and bindery. He gave encouragement to every impulse to better living conditions. These impulses he had to create against stubborn opposition. The transformation he wrought was wonderful.

Charles Kingsley's work in Eversley parish, England, was remarkable. His accomplishments in the first five months of his pastorate were marvellous: "New clubs for the poor, a shoe club, coal club,

[1] "The Story of John Frederick Oberlin," Augustus Field Beard.

maternal society, a loan fund, and lending library were established one after another. An intelligent young parishioner, who was till lately schoolmaster, was sent by the rector to Winchester Training College; an adult evening school was held in the rectory all the winter months; a Sunday-school met there every Sunday morning and afternoon; and weekly cottage lectures were established in the outlying districts for the old and feeble. At the beginning of his ministry there was scarcely a grown-up man or woman among the labouring class who could read or write—for as boys and girls they had all been glad to escape early to field work from the one school—a stifling room ten feet square, where cobbling shoes, teaching and caning went on together."[1]

The work of Rev. G. Frederick Wells at Lincoln, Vermont, in a "decadent mountain township," is well worthy of mention. "Five years ago three church societies united under one pastor in what was called the Federated Churches. The Ladies' Aid and Good Templar's Hall was the parish-house. It was the home of the Grange, of the Good Templar's Lodge, the Grand Army Post, the village library, the Young Men's Christian Association, the church prayer-meeting, and all the leading social entertainments and lectures of the church and community. The Federated Churches, the schools, and the Grange were in active coöperation. Lincoln's first farmers' institute, under the direction of the State Board of

[1] "Works of Charles Kingsley," Vol. VII; Letters and Memories, p. 98. Quoted from "The Country Church and Social Service," G. Frederick Wells.

Agriculture, was a result of their coöperation. From the pastor's leadership through the same centralized movement, young men graduated from the Dairy School of the State Agricultural College; the public schools were stimulated to higher standards; the Young Men's Christian Association, and its baseball team were organized; and home-talent plays afforded the most wholesome popular entertainments which the community had known in years. Religious enterprises were always predominant. One year of the work saw church attendance increased forty per cent., more than a score of baptisms, church-membership nearly doubled; and the largest gatherings of the people always those upon purely religious occasions. The moral forces of the community were radically changed. In response to the growth of local possibilities two of the churches became one by organic union; and the two resulting churches continued to coöperate in touching the whole changing life of the 1,000 people in the township. The community to-day is a paradise compared to former conditions, and the work, though still under test, is moving forward."[1]

[1] "The Country Church and Social Service," Rev. G. Frederick Wells, B. D., in the *Gospel of the Kingdom*, November, 1910.

III

THE POSSIBILITY OF UNITY

HOW Protestantism reached its present splintered condition is to us a matter of minor importance. Those things belong to ancient history. We are concerned with the perpetuation of the division only. And there seems to be no satisfactory justification for the continuance of such a policy, destructive as it is to the highest efficiency and economy of the Church, as well as its highest spiritual development, especially since the conditions out of which the separations grew have ceased to be.

In 1909 the Department of Commerce and Labour at Washington issued a bulletin which contained statistics of the religious bodies of the United States from 1890 to 1906—a period of sixteen years. A casual study of this bulletin might create the impression that the religious world was drifting farther and farther apart and that there was little or no hope that the divisions of the Protestant world would ever be healed. This report indicates that during these sixteen years forty-one new denominations were added to the already long list. A careful study of these statistics, however, reveals the fact that many of these so-called denominations have no claim to be regarded as Christian; and still others cannot properly be called churches. Eleven were added

through immigration. Most of them are very small and of no real practical significance. They are only eddies in the great stream of religious progress.

The thing of chief significance in the religious world is not included in this report, indeed could not be; and that is the marvellous growth within recent years of a sentiment favourable to the unity of all Protestant churches. Within recent years most wonderful changes have occurred; a complete change has come over the spirit of the times. The world has lost its interest in the old time theological discussions; and the bitterness and bigotry that characterized the Church only a few years ago are gone never to return. It is plainly evident that denominationalism is dying. Emphasis is being transferred rapidly from the doctrinal to the practical and social manifestations of faith. The tendency of modern religious life is to get together, to work together, and to ignore petty differences. The idea of unity is in the very air we breathe, the unity of a common purpose and a common task in loyalty to a common Master.

1. Bitterness and Bigotry of the Past

It will be quite interesting and helpful, we think, to take a peep into the conditions of the religious world as far back as the days of Wesley, Whitfield, Rowland Hill, and Toplady. We are accustomed to look upon these men as saints; and they were; but they were rather savage saints in a rather savage age. The doctrine of election was the chief bone of contention between these men. The bitterness of

their discussions would hardly be tolerated in politics to-day. Wesley on one occasion wrote of Toplady: "Mr. Augustus Toplady I know well; but I do not fight with chimney-sweepers. He is too dirty a writer for me to meddle with; I should only foul my fingers."[1] This is Toplady, the author of "Rock of Ages." But he paid Wesley back in his own coin. He said of Wesley: "God is my witness how earnestly I wish it may consist with the divine will to touch the heart of that unhappy man. I hold it as much my duty to pray for his conversion as to expose the futility of his railings against the truths of the Gospel." Both John and Charles Wesley had a rather poor opinion of Calvinists. Among other things they called them "devil's factors," "Satan's synagogues," "children of the old roaring hellish murderer who believe his lie," "advocates for sin," "witnesses for the father of lies," "blasphemers" and "Satan-sent preachers." Hill and Wesley had many battles over Calvinism. Neither could find anything too severe to say of the other. Hill wrote several pamphlets in which he handled Wesley after the fashion of his day. *An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered* was a pamphlet directed against Wesley; *Pope John* was another. Among other names Hill called Wesley "the lying apostle of the foundry," "a dealer in stolen wares" and "a designing wolf." We suppose Hill won the blue ribbon for his special ability in buffoonery when he said of Wesley that he was "as unprincipled as a rook and as silly as a jackdaw,

[1] "Battles of the Saints," by George Francis Green, *The Outlook*, April 26, 1902, p. 1012.

first pilfering his neighbour's plumage and then going proudly forth displaying his borrowed tail to the eyes of a laughing world." Such conduct was characteristic of the age. Those were the times when denominations were made; but those days are gone long since. We cannot imagine such conduct among Christian ministers to-day.

2. Influences Contributing to the Idea of Unity

The historical method of Bible study has contributed much in bringing men together in their thinking. This is the inevitable outcome of studying the Bible in an earnest effort to find what it really teaches, rather than in an effort to find plausible arguments to support some previously worked out system of theology. However unsatisfactory some of the *results* of higher criticism at the hands of certain rationalists may be—and many of them are very unsatisfactory—the *method* of higher criticism has come to stay. The old theological method of Bible study is gone.

There is a wide-spread and well recognized growth of the kingdom of God. Men are thinking in its terms and consecrating themselves to its service. This has been accompanied by a general and rapidly growing desire everywhere for unity.

Many tendencies encouraging to unity are found in the Protestant Episcopal church. This church has always refused any sort of recognition of other Protestant churches, while it insisted on a doctrine of apostolic succession that has been repudiated by

the scholarship of the world. But the late General Conference of the Episcopal church in triennial session at Cincinnati in October, 1910, appointed a commission to call a world-wide conference on Christian unity. This commission has organized with Bishop Charles P. Anderson, of Chicago, as president. And this is the significant feature of this new movement. Bishop Anderson was one of the speakers of the Laymen's Missionary Congress which met recently in Chicago, and he devoted a large part of his address to the subject of Christian unity. His views as expressed in that address are very much more considerate of other churches than the traditional attitude of the Episcopal church. His address was a repudiation of the idea that the Protestant world is to unite by entering the Episcopal fold; he advocates a real unity to which each denomination would make its contribution. This commission is organized and at work. Its treasurer, the late J. Pierpont Morgan, contributed $100,000 for the expenses of the movement. Good progress is being made. The admirable book of Bishop Brown, to which reference has already been made, is indicative of a most wholesome tendency among Episcopalians.

The most interesting situation, however, among the denominations, is to be found in the Disciples' or Christian Church. This church has always had for its special programme the unity of the Christian world; but it has always insisted on unity on the basis of its own creed, on the basis of its own interpretation of the Scriptures. Originally the church

was very exclusive, repudiating all hope of heaven for the pious unimmersed. Some of them even yet refuse to fellowship other denominations. The church met in 1910 in a National Convention at Topeka, Kansas. The progressive element of the denomination feel that this convention is far more significant than the great Centennial Celebration of the year before at Pittsburgh. The significant address of the meeting was delivered by a pastor from Baltimore, the Rev. Peter Ainslee.[1] He made an address that stirred the assembly like an earthquake. In speaking of the most needful progress of their denomination he said: "The time has come when we have got to change our attitude towards our religious brethren. Sometimes it looks as if we regarded the Methodists and Presbyterians and the others as our enemies. We can't win them by throwing stones at them; but we can win them by love. We should regard them as brothers. If they deny it we should claim it still, and if they deny it again we should go on claiming them as brothers. The baptismal question is not as large a question as it once was. Thomas Campbell's plea was to unite the world."

This address created a profound sensation among the thousands of delegates. In the afternoon by request he repeated the address to a larger audience. He was asked if he meant to put the whole fellowship to humiliation before the whole world. He answered that there was no humiliation in repenting of a mis-

[1] This address was amplified later in the author's Yale Lectures, just published, under the title "The Message of the Disciples for the Union of the Church."

take and in changing a wrong policy. As a result a Council on Christian Union was organized of which Mr. Ainslee was made the president. This council is to conduct a campaign among Disciples in the interest of a changed attitude of their own church towards other denominations, an attitude favourable to unity without requiring other denominations to accept the Disciples' former theological position. The millennium must be near! Here and there notable immersionists insist that while they believe in immersion themselves they do not regard it as of sufficient importance to justify the maintenance of a separate denomination on that distinction alone.

Many things have contributed to the changed conditions favourable to unity. The Evangelical Alliance, organized in 1845 with the purpose, among other things, "to manifest and strengthen Christian unity, and to promote religious liberty, and coöperation in Christian work, without interfering with the internal affairs of the different denominations," has done good work. Every year at its suggestion the Christian world unites in a week of prayer.

The growth of interdenominational work has done much to cultivate a spirit of fraternity and unity among us. Christian Endeavour Societies, the Student Volunteer Association, The Laymen's Missionary Movement and the most recent of all, the Men and Religion Forward Movement, are examples.

The Federation of the Churches of Christ in America, comprising thirty-one denominations and representing some 16,000,000 of membership, was formed in Philadelphia, December, 1908. It has

five administrative secretaries and seven departmental committees. Federations have now been formed in more than twenty states and the work is going rapidly forward. Village, city and state federations are being formed in all parts of the United States. Most of the large cities now have federations. More was done in this work during 1910 than during the five years previous, and its work steadily gains volume.

Federation has done more practical work towards unity than any existing organization. Unity is not possible now: federation is possible. The sectarian spirit will not yield at once; its cure will require time and patience. But federation promises great things towards its cure.

The Pan-Presbyterian Alliance has done splendid work among Presbyterians. The association of the representatives of all these churches has naturally brought them closer together. The object of the Alliance is to increase the efficiency of Presbyterianism in the world. The Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists are adopting similar agencies with the same objects in view.

The Laymen's Missionary Congress which convened in Chicago, May, 1910, composed as it was of laymen from all parts of the United States, gave a great impetus to the idea of unity. It was discussed in many of the addresses. There was nothing more significant about the convention than its attitude towards this question. The greatest speech of the convention was devoted entirely to the question of unity. No sentiment was cheered so often or so long as that

sentiment. The great World's Missionary Convention met at Edinburgh in June, 1910, and the *Interior* of Chicago said, "A Missionary Convention was called at Edinburgh. It turned out to be a union convention. In that remarkable phenomenon lies the profoundest significance of the World's Missionary Conference." There is no more important publication on the subject of church unity than the eighth volume of the published reports of this conference; a volume devoted entirely to the subject of coöperation and union of all the denominations. It is a most encouraging and inspiring volume. It discloses the fact that movements favourable to unity are much more common and effective in mission fields than in the home churches. Missionaries after a hundred years of faithful work have discovered that the world can never be evangelized till the churches are unified. The churches on mission fields would soon be unified if they were not hindered by the churches at home. That was a significant prophecy of the late Bishop Wescott when he said that if unity ever came it would come from the circumference to the centre. That is exactly what is happening to-day. The problems of the mission fields are rapidly forcing the mission churches towards unity. The greatest outcome of the missionary work of the nineteenth century probably will be the unity of all the churches at home and abroad during the twentieth century.

3. Some Things Already Accomplished

Much has already been accomplished in the direction of unity. The success of the Federal Council

of the Churches of Christ in America has already been mentioned. Negotiations looking towards union between the Presbyterian Church, North, and the Protestant Episcopal, although broken off some twenty years since because the Episcopalians would not recognize the equality of the Presbyterian ministry, have accomplished good. They stimulated the study of the origin, the transmission and the authority of the Christian ministry and as a result we are brought closer together. Progress has been made in the Episcopal church and there are not wanting evidences that that church might now make concessions that were declined a few years ago. Bishop Brown of Arkansas, in his book recently published, tells us that, "It probably would now be impossible to get a representative committee of the Protestant Episcopal church that would have the assurance to approach one of our sister or daughter Protestant churches except on the level."[1] If he is correct about the matter—and that is by no means certain—that would eliminate the troublesome doctrine of apostolic succession; certainly a great gain to the cause of unity. In any event there is a most wholesome tendency in this direction.

The Presbyterian church is somewhat in the lead in the work at the present. Since 1858 in the United States at least three important unions have occurred among Presbyterians and negotiations are pending for others. In 1858 the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches became the United Pres-

[1] "The Level Plan for Church Union," William Montgomery Brown, D. D., p. 208.

byterian Church. In 1869 the "Old" and "New" School Presbyterians were united. In 1907 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church united with the Presbyterian Church, North. Elsewhere the work has been going forward. In 1875 the Presbyterian Church of Canada was formed by the union of four bodies. In 1876 the United Presbyterian Church of England united with the Presbyterian Church of England. In 1900 the United Free Church of Scotland was formed out of the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches; and negotiations are pending looking towards one United Presbyterian Church for all Scotland. In 1901 six Presbyterian churches in Australia and two in New Zealand united. The Presbyterian Church, North, has for some years maintained a committee on church union ready for negotiations with similar committees in kindred churches.

The Methodist church has been making progress in the same direction. Recently three Methodist bodies united in England. One Methodist church for all Canada is the result of a union of five bodies fully consummated in 1883. There has been a union of Methodist churches in New Zealand and Australia, also in Tasmania and the South Sea Islands. Since 1902 there has been only one Australasian church. The Northern Baptists and Free Baptists have agreed to a basis of unity that already makes their home and foreign missions one. In Scotland there has been a union of the Congregational and Evangelical union churches.

Many propositions for unity are pending in various

parts of the world. In the United States negotiations looking towards union are pending between the Presbyterian Church, North, and the Reformed Church of the United States; also between the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant. In Australia the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians are trying to get together. In South Africa negotiations are in progress between the Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians looking towards union. In new Zealand two Methodist bodies are trying to get together. The Methodist, the Presbyterian, and the Congregationalist churches of Canada are making splendid progress in their negotiations; and it is hoped that their unity will be a matter of but a short time. There are committees on unity in various denominations. The Presbyterian Church, North, and the Disciples have already been mentioned. The Congregationalists have such a committee also.

The idea of unity has had larger growth on the foreign field than in other parts of the world because the necessity for it is keenest there. Less has been accomplished there in actual unity than the people were ready for because home churches have stood in the way. There are very few missionaries who are not ready for it. Foreign mission boards by conferences have sought to reach agreements as to the division of territory, in order to prevent waste in overlapping and to combine forces in hospitals, schools and the press. But these arrangements are found, for many reasons, to be insufficient.

A very satisfactory plan of work exists in the Philippines. An Evangelical Union there includes all the missions except the Episcopal. They respect the discipline and polity of one another, receive members from one another, asking only for certificates, and they avoid all duplication.

Some considerable progress has been made in the unity of churches on the foreign field chiefly among certain families. There, as in Christian countries, the Presbyterians lead in the work. Twenty-five years ago all the Presbyterian and Reformed churches in Japan, six in all, united to form one common church. In Korea there is but one Presbyterian church. In China the Presbyterian church embraces eight different bodies and it extends an invitation to all others of kindred faith to unite with it. Presbyterian unions have occurred in South Africa, India, Mexico, and the New Hebrides; the Presbyterian Church, North, and the Presbyterian Church, South, are one in Brazil. Several years ago all the Methodist churches of Japan united. The Church of England and the American Episcopal church are one in Japan. The Methodist churches in China are trying to unite. There are movements towards union among Lutherans in Japan, China and India. Progress is being made among Congregationalists and Baptists everywhere on the foreign field. At Kuling, the great sanatorium for Central China, is found one of the most remarkable union services on the globe. As many as one thousand people meet in this church and its services are conducted by members of all the missions without restrictions.

Coöperation in schools, hospitals and publication is common on the foreign field. The Methodist, the Presbyterian, North, the Presbyterian, South, and the Disciples unite in maintaining a Bible training school in Nanking. There is a Christian University at Shantung of three colleges, Theology, Medicine and Arts, which the Baptists and Presbyterians unite in supporting. In Calcutta the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland have united in college work. They also coöperate in Manchuria and Japan. The theological departments of the Meiji Gakuin and the Aoyama Gakuin of Tokyo are supported by different denominations. In Amoy, China, there is a union theological school and one more important still has been proposed for Bangalore. There are "Book and Tract Societies" serving all the missions at Seoul in Korea and at Tokyo in Japan. There is large coöperation in such work in China, also in India. But there is need of larger coöperation.

There is a demand on the foreign field for a larger unity. The China Conference of Missions in West China held at Chengtu in 1908 unanimously declared "one Protestant church for West China" as its ideal. In India there has already been a union of different families among the churches and there is an increasing demand for the unity of all. Space forbids the enumeration of other instances. They are numerous.

IV

THE ONLY POSSIBLE BASIS OF UNITY

THE only possible basis for the unity of Protestantism is one that recognizes the essential equality of the churches and the parity of the ministry. It is a waste of time to discuss a proposition that would invalidate the ordination of thousands of ministers.

Nothing short of the broadest possible basis of doctrine and government can ever be made a satisfactory basis. The Chicago-Lambeth articles propose entirely too much. Two articles even in the Apostles' Creed present difficulties; the resurrection of the body and the descent of Christ into hell. The Nicene Creed was drawn up for the purpose of excluding Arianism. Both of these creeds bear marks of the age when they were formed. Shall they be subscribed to in their original historical forms or in their later Roman and Anglican adaptation? The trouble with creeds is that they are necessarily divisive, and therefore the less creed the better.

1. The Fundamental Character of the Church

Before we can intelligently discuss the possible basis for church unity we need clearly to understand the nature and function of the Church. We cannot

intelligently determine a basis for operations in any organization until we understand what the organization proposes primarily to be and to do. Just what did Jesus have in mind for His Church? What ends did He seek and how did He seek them? What was the character of the New Testament Church? These are questions which cannot be ignored in this discussion.

We do not mean to imply that we are to find all our problems solved by the New Testament. Some things in religion are essential and some are circumstantial; some are permanent and some are passing. Just what methods and polity shall be may best be determined by each church according to its own requirements. These things we believe were left to the Church to be determined by its best wisdom. But we need to go to the New Testament for the essentials.

All profess to go back to the New Testament and there find answers to all these questions; but the interest in turning back to the New Testament for centuries past for the most part has been for dogmatic purposes, to justify traditional dogmas and polity. Such a purpose vitiates conclusions before they are reached. Only methods of Bible study which seek to find what its writers really taught, whether it suits one or not, can get the truth.

The early Church according to the New Testament, as we have already seen, was organized "as a school of helpers, as a brotherhood of a new life, as a fellowship of sympathy and of upward striving." It was a family with God as a common Father and

its members were all "brethren." Its purpose was to bring the kingdom of God to supreme power among men. In it there were no theological tests, not even for ministers. The only moral requirement was the evidence of a new spirit of life. The weak in faith were not rejected. The followers of Jesus considered themselves dead to their former lives because they had been made new creatures and walked in newness of life. They felt themselves bound together by ties stronger than those of blood. He that would not forsake father or mother, if need be, was not considered worthy. A simplicity characterized their work and worship. And the early Church possessed some secret that was lost to succeeding ages, even long before the days of Protestantism. The early Church exhibited a devotion, an enthusiasm, a sympathy, a fellowship and a brotherhood which none of us can claim. And they accomplished incredible results in an incredibly short time.

But all this was soon changed. The spirit of fraternity and brotherhood gave place to an institutional idea made important as an end in itself. And the Church soon came to have its hierarchies, liturgies, creeds, disciplines and machinery for propagandism; and these are made so important that they are placed before fraternity and brotherhood and retained at the expense of these things. It was a sad day for Christianity when this profound change occurred; when the simple family groups of Christian believers, bound together as they were by the same love, faith, hope and purpose, were transformed into an authoritative ecclesiastical organization. By such

a change it became an exclusive institution with its regular government, its laws and penalties and the right to inflict them on the disobedient. This marked the close of Catholicism, and ushered in the age of sectarianism. These changes were followed by the idea that only those activities connected with the Church were sacred, that all others, while permissible, were not holy. The work at home, behind the counter, at the workshop and elsewhere was thus left unhallowed by religion. A cure of our evils involves a full recovery of the idea of the kingdom of God and a Church of the New Testament spirit and type.

The general idea of the Church to-day is that of an institution built upon a dogmatic foundation expressed in oral or written creeds; and the larger part of these creeds consist of things admittedly non-essential. The minister's primary qualifications are of a sectarian character. In fact the Church "has subordinated life to dogma, brotherhood to organization and extension of an institution, fellowship and sympathy to sectarian zeal and loyalty," and as a result finds itself shorn of its power.

Efforts to get together have generally been efforts to find a basis for the union of the institutionalism which the Church has become. There might be certain advantages in such an union; but it would not cure the evils which afflict us.

The evils from which the Church suffers did not begin with division; division augmented them and brought them more plainly to view. Losing sight of the kingdom of God as a present reality and its per-

fection as the final goal of the Church was the first fundamental mistake. Then the Church ceased to be a real brotherhood. As a result division became easy. Brotherhood in the Church to-day is only a word to conjure with. Denominationalism does not have it. Many refuse to commune with those who have not been baptized in their way ; the parity of the minister is not recognized. Until the Church practices brotherhood the world will not believe in it, or believe that the Church believes in it. There needs to be a fundamental change in the prevalent conception of the Church, its character, ideals and function and a complete recovery of the New Testament idea of the kingdom of God. To remedy the evil we must get at the bottom of it. As we have already said our trouble, at heart, is a want of supreme loyalty to Jesus Christ ; it is a supreme loyalty to lesser things than Christ. The first step is a return to supreme loyalty to our Master. Then it will again become possible to make the Church what its founder intended it to be, a brotherhood of the new life, with a perfected kingdom of God on earth as its goal.

Doctrines and practices are not unimportant but they are secondary. Those who desire creeds, liturgies and such may be permitted to have them for their own edification, so long as they do not allow them to interfere with the spirit of sympathy, fellowship and brotherhood which must have the primary place.

But doctrines that cannot be embodied in character and deeds are not very important. This fact is

made clear in Christ's most significant parable of the last Judgment. The Church began without written creeds and they are no more necessary to its success now than then. And unless they can be made a help rather than a hindrance they ought to be abolished.

2. The Character and Use to be Made of a Creed

Whether a creed can be formulated on which Protestantism can unite depends on the limitation of the subjects treated in the creed, and the use which is proposed for the creed.

Shall the creed contain only the simple requirements to constitute one a Christian? The only requirement of the early Church was a personal attachment to Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, Lord and Master. That is all that has ever been required to make one a Christian. The Protestant world is agreed on these simple requirements now. To formulate a creed embodying these things only ought not to be difficult. Any church ought to be able sincerely to adopt such a creed as that. Such a creed would contain the essentials of Christianity and therefore the fundamentals. If unity ever comes it must be on the basis of the things held in common by all: loyalty to Jesus Christ comprises those things. When we get away from this we begin to divide at once. There must be something about Christianity somewhere that is fixed, beyond which there can be no Christianity. Loyalty to Jesus Christ is that thing. "In none other is there salvation; for neither

is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." [1]

If Christianity is true no man can be saved without Christ; it may be possible for men to be saved without intellectually knowing Him; an experimental knowledge may be possible without the intellectual; there may be unconscious Christians. Our preaching of the Christ may be such a caricature of Him that men may reject our caricature, thinking they are rejecting our Christ, when they may really accept His spirit; but the Church of to-day is supposed to be composed of those who are conscious Christians and it is with these that we are here concerned.

Even such a creed as this, if it could be called a creed, would be divisive and exclusive. But it must be remembered that Christianity is the most exclusive thing in the world. While such a creed would be divisive, the division would come where one already and inevitably exists. There is a real difference between a Christian and one who is not; if not Christianity has nothing to offer the world. Such a division would not be artificial but vital and real. And it is the only possible division that is vital and real. This divides the Christian from the non-Christian. And any other division would be a division of Christians, even loyal Christians, which can only be hurtful.

Then, why should we insist on a creed as a basis for unity which in an unauthorized and arbitrary way separates the most loyal Christians? The Christian Church ought to include all Christians;

[1] Acts iv. 12.

and loyalty to Christ is the only basis on which it can be done. This will furnish bonds enough to bind the Church together more strongly than any organization in existence. Professor Bosworth of Oberlin is quoted[1] as saying that four things bind men together: Devotion to a common work; the enjoyment of a common hope; deliverance from a common peril; and loyalty to a common friend. This basis includes all four of these things. One of these alone has often bound men together very strongly.

No basis of agreement including less than loyalty to Christ would be possible for the ministry because there is a limit to coöperation: "In preaching the Gospel therefore—that is, in telling the glad tidings that God has made Himself known to men and in so doing has brought life and immortality to light—the Christian cannot in the nature of the case coöperate with those who have no such glad tidings to give to others. He must be exclusive in his ministry because, much to his regret, he is exclusive in his possessions. He has a joyous faith to give which others have not; therefore they cannot join with him in giving it."[2]

The Church is wise in requiring more of the ministry than of the laity. In the unity of Protestantism that principle would still hold good. While the system of theology would be left to each individual to work out for himself, the minister's additional

[1] J. Campbell White in "Men's National Missionary Congress, 1910," p. 59.

[2] *The Outlook*, January 19, 1907, p. 152.

requirements would be found among the things that evidenced his call and qualified him for the work. He should be "apt to teach."

If a larger and more comprehensive creed is deemed necessary, whether such a creed can be formulated as a basis of unity depends on the use to which the creed shall be put. Shall the larger creed become a contract between believers, a creed to be accepted and believed sincerely and conscientiously by the whole united Church? or shall it be accepted simply as the Church's best appreciation of the truth, its systematic and comprehensive testimony to the truth; and with a frank recognition that it is nothing more than a broad platform statement of doctrines as held by the majority and binding on nobody?

If the larger creed must be accepted and believed by the whole united Church, then such a creed is impossible. Creeds that must be believed are always divisive. This is historically true and in the nature of the case must always remain true. The necessary object of any creed is to set limits; to name a place beyond which orthodoxy cannot go. Many good men seem to be strangely blind to the simple, and to us self-evident proposition, that the Protestant world can never be one in theology. It can be one only in the things actually required to make one a Christian and in the loving and active service of the Master.

While great progress towards unity has been made within recent years it has been hindered not a little by the idea that people in the same church

ought to think the same things. Most of the efforts towards unity have been efforts to find a common and comprehensive creed to which all can subscribe; but it is increasingly evident that this cannot be done, except as indicated above. Certain churches might unite on such a basis but not all Protestantism. In South Africa the Presbyterian, the Congregational and the Baptist churches are endeavouring to effect a union. They propose a union on the basis of loyalty to Christ and of mutual toleration in doctrine and polity. The Baptists are entering the union under the agreement that they shall have the liberty to practice baptism by immersion exclusively; and they have retained the right even to refuse communion to the pious unimmersed as long as they choose to do so. That much is a long step in the right direction. Leave each church to establish its own practices. Allow ministers, loyal to Jesus Christ, to preach what they sincerely believe. Force no one to accept or practice anything that does not seem to him good. When once that spirit prevails the problems of unity that confront the Church will soon be solved, and differences will become no longer an embarrassment. That spirit will solve problems which seem incapable of solution now. If we can only become supremely loyal to Jesus Christ we cannot remain apart. What we need is the spirit of Christlikeness. The spirit always finds a way. Every denomination cannot have its way; but when all practice the precept "in honour preferring one another," it will be easy. In British South Africa not long since a definite agree-

ment for union was adopted: and strange as it may seem, Presbyterians agree to serve under a bishop, and Quakers agree to use the sacraments, and all will use a liturgy and extemporaneous prayer. That is an example of what can be done when we get the spirit of unity.

Another thing should be considered. Our differences in theology are often only a quarrel over words. Take the doctrine of inspiration. Various theories of inspiration are held; but we must not identify any theory with the doctrine. With all our heart we believe in the inspiration of the Bible. But many good Christians deny inspiration at least to some parts of it, some deny it to any part. Many accept the doctrine but hold a theory which seems to eliminate almost, if not entirely, every divine element. And yet all Christians admit and even insist that the Bible is a unique book, that it has had a unique history, that it has exerted and continues to exert a unique influence and power over the world in the production of a unique and desirable fruit. Therefore, we insist that our differences here are simply a quarrel over words. The character of the Bible, its influence on the hearts and consciences of men and consequently upon civilization is certainly the highest possible evidence of its inspiration. If it produced a fruit no better than that of the Koran or book of Mormon any claims that the Bible itself might make would be worth no more than the claims of inspiration in those books.

Take the infallibility of the Bible. Many good Christians see many mistakes in it. But all agree

that its fundamental principles, its ideals, ethics, spirit, and its moral and spiritual requirements are infallible. It certainly exists for these things. If these things, its inner spirit, cannot be successfully attacked—and no Christian pretends that they can be—that ought to be sufficient. If it is an infallible guide in faith and practice what more do we need? We quarrel over words.

Take one more illustration, the deity of Jesus Christ. To us there is no doctrine more important. We cannot be satisfied with a Saviour less than deity; we do not believe that one less than deity can be of any service to us. And yet we believe that even here terminology may confuse us. The spirit of Jesus is the important thing. And we think it cannot be denied that many who deny His deity in words do really have His spirit in a large measure, even larger than many who are more orthodox. Many are our verbal disagreements when at heart we are one. This fact ought to make us careful in our requirements.

If the larger and more comprehensive creed is to be used only as a testimony to the truth, it ought not to be difficult to formulate. Christianity is a living thing and a closed formula can never contain its truths. Theology is progressive because the world is progressive and the Spirit is guiding the Church into all the truth. Therefore orthodoxy is changing. Systems of theology are products of the reflective life of the Church and as such they must change from age to age. They can never be perfect because we can never know the Infinite perfectly. God is ever

the same; His laws never change, the Bible will remain the same, but our understanding of them has changed and will change. The Presbyterian Church, North, added to the Westminster Confession of Faith a chapter on the Holy Spirit and Missions, because the Church had come to know more about God and the Bible than the makers of the Confession knew. It will ever be so. No creedal basis for unity can be found that does not grant the widest possible divergence in matters non-essential and that does not provide for reasonable growth in the apprehension of God's truth. A creedal testimony to the truth will meet all the requirements.

The unity of Protestantism can never be on the basis of uniformity; it must be a unity in variety. There was unity without uniformity in the early Church. The Gentile Christians were admitted without being required to conform to Jewish usage. The Jewish Christians, including the apostles, continued their Jewish observances in the synagogues and temple. Gentiles were relieved of this burden. From the beginning it is plainly evident that there were two parties among the Jews in the early Church[1] but they lived together harmoniously. There will always be differences in practice, ritual and teaching. Any other unity is both impossible and undesirable. So we had as well agree to disagree about some things. Unity in theology is an absolute impossibility. It has never existed and never will. The sooner that fact is recognized the better. God did not make us so that we can think alike. The exam-

[1] Acts xv. 1-35.

ination of a few human heads ought to settle that matter forever. If men were born with the inherent ability to think alike, the influences of environment and education would render it impossible.

But we are fully convinced that a very much larger agreement in theological opinion is possible where no creed comprising more than the requirements to make a Christian is imposed, than where one is imposed. Creed-subscription as practiced among us defeats its very purpose. Doctrines are invaluable in the Church; but dogmas have always been a curse. A doctrine is a working conviction of the mind; dogmas are doctrines authoritatively promulgated. "While science prides itself," says J. M. Lloyd Thomas, "on freedom from dogma, it is never so foolish as to pride itself on freedom from doctrine. The doctrine of evolution, for instance, is universally accepted by scientific men, but it is not a dogma. Any man is at liberty to test and verify the facts. Various interpretations can be put upon them, so that a Darwin and Wallace, Spencer and Wiesemann, do not speak exactly the same things. . . . Is it not extraordinarily significant that, while the liberty of science has resulted in a practical unanimity of opinion, the discipline of dogma has begotten schism, hundreds of creed-bound sects in mutual antagonism? It is safe to predict that, if theological agreement is ever to be attained, it can only be in the fresh and invigorating air of religious liberty."[1] These words are worthy of serious consideration.

[1] "A Free Catholic Church," by J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

3. A Return to Reformation and Apostolic Principles

Our contention is only for a return to the fundamental position of the Reformation. Luther broke with Catholicism on two fundamental points. First, what is the final standard of authority? Rome said, the Church; Luther said, the Bible. Second, how shall the Bible be interpreted? Rome said, by the Church; Luther said, by the individual himself. This position of Luther, fundamental to the Reformation, was embodied in all the great Protestant creeds.

The success of the Reformation was a guarantee of the right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Bible, and therefore in the building of systems of theology. A later Protestantism departed from this position and sought to establish again the authority of the Church. If these fundamental principles of the Reformation had been observed by Protestantism its history would have been different. The contention of the Reformation was only for principles that prevailed in the early Church. Every man in the early Church had a right to his own best interpretation of the Bible. No creed, unless the things required to make one loyal to Jesus may be called a creed, was imposed on any one. Every man was allowed to work out his own system of theology as God gave him the light. The two hundred years of such practice in the early Church is the most prosperous period of the Church's history. It will never be duplicated till we return to this primitive method.

The only possible basis for the unity of Protestantism, then, is a basis of loyalty to Jesus Christ and of mutual toleration among Christians in all non-essentials, a basis that allows the largest possible room for diversity. Diversity is a good thing and does not need to be abolished. The inevitable differences of human nature are no greater now than in New Testament times, before denominations were thought of. There were the same differences of environment and in the manner of interpreting Christ and His truth then that there are to-day; but these differences did not then interfere with the unity of the Church. They need not now. No man need surrender any doctrine or practice that is dear to him. The only thing required for such unity is for each man to stop trying to force his theological system of non-essentials on other people. All Christians have the essentials; he who has the essentials may be trusted to work out his own system of non-essentials. No one need give up anything except his ecclesiastical conceit, his denominational pride and his inherited prejudices. And the loss of these will be a great gain.

Differences of opinion in theology among us in such a unified Church would be no greater than they are now in every one of our denominations. The widest possible differences exist among the ministers of our various denominations to-day. Many of these differences are never made public, however. It never has been prevented, it never will be. Every church in the land has discovered that it is necessary to tolerate among its membership and ministry great differences

of individual thought and belief. The result is a growing spirit of toleration everywhere. What we need, therefore, in order to unity is not a reduction of our creeds to a common agreement, but an agreement to exercise in the larger unified Church a toleration of differences; a toleration which concedes that a Christian can be trusted alone with Jesus and his Bible. It would seem that a Christian minister at least ought to be so trusted. Ministers of various churches exchange courtesies and work together side by side in union meetings with the best of success. Their differences are not found to be in their way there. Why can they not do so in one great reunited Church?

The writer is the pastor of a church composed of members from many different denominations. It was formed originally by the union of two different kinds of Presbyterians. Now it has within its membership representatives of most of the leading denominations in the country. They work together harmoniously; no one could tell that they were not all born Presbyterians. The secret of their perfect harmony is the fact that they work together on a basis of loyalty to Jesus Christ and of mutual toleration in doctrine. No one is required to subscribe to any creed when he or she joins unless loyalty to Jesus Christ is a creed. They are asked only as to their loyalty to Jesus Christ. Baptists are not required to bring their babies to be sprinkled. All are immersed who prefer it; they could have trinal immersion if they desired it. Recently some Friends were received into the congregation. They had never

been baptized by any mode. They did not want to be baptized and they were received without it. Birth, association and environment have brought all of these people together, as they bring them together elsewhere, and because nothing is required of anybody except loyalty to Jesus Christ, they work together harmoniously. Every church in the land is composed more or less of members received from other denominations. Every church is glad to get such members. If single churches so composed can work together harmoniously why can it not be done in one great reunited Church?

This is not advocating any slipshod theology. This is not indifference to error. Neither is it saying that it makes no difference what people believe; or that it is as well to believe one thing as another. Indifference to truth or error is not toleration. It makes no difference what people believe on many subjects. But it makes a tremendous difference what people believe concerning some things. Yet we have sufficient confidence in the vitality of truth to believe that it can take care of itself if given a chance. If it cannot it is not the truth. Truth has self-evidencing powers of its own; give it a chance. Truth even mixed with error carries divine benefit; and given a chance it will purge itself of the dross. We owe our sympathy to other men in their struggles with doubt and in their efforts to find the truth. Toleration in non-essentials enables us to give it. Loyalty to Christ and toleration in non-essentials are the vital virtues of Christianity; on that basis we can unify the Protestant world.

Unity is no Utopian dream. It is a vision that is to be realized on earth among men. It is coming. Had some prophet of Wesley's day foretold the extent of the spirit of toleration of our time he would have been considered visionary. The New Testament makes no provision for anything else and solemnly warns against division. Jesus had other sheep which He promised to bring that there might be one flock, one Shepherd. He prayed for the unity of His Church; and His prayer must be answered; it will be answered. The evangelization and Christianization of the world are not possible without it; and the kingdoms of the world are to be made "the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ." The Church is the body of Christ and it cannot be forever rent. Unity is involved in the Holy City which John saw coming down from God out of heaven to dwell among men. That city has been coming down through all these ages, and is still coming. It is making and will make all things new.

"How long, dear Saviour, O, how long,
Shall that bright hour delay?
Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the glorious day."

Appendix

Appendix A

According to the report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1909–1910 there were at that time in the United States one hundred and fifty-two Protestant theological seminaries with 1,102 instructors for the education of 8,233 Protestant students; that is, one theological seminary for every fifty-four students, and also one theological instructor for every seven and four-tenths students. Of these seminaries one hundred and seven reported buildings and grounds worth $14,384,300; one hundred reported $33,267,000 in endowment; one hundred and four reported an income of $3,087,600, including benefactions. This is by no means the totals for these items because forty-eight seminaries do not report incomes; fifty-two do not report endowment; and forty-five do not report the value of buildings and grounds. Many of these seminaries are departments of universities where these things are held in common by all departments. The benefactions for theological seminaries, for all denominations, reached the sum of $1,431,208 for the year.

The same government report indicates that we had two Protestant theological seminaries with only two

students each; two with three each; one with four; three with five each; two with seven each; two with eight each; three with nine each; three with ten each; and sixteen with from eleven to fifteen each. These thirty-four seminaries had enrolled three hundred and seventeen students, an average of a little more than nine each. Sixty-four other seminaries had less than fifty each; they had exactly 2,004 students, an average of thirty-one each. Thirty-four reported from fifty to one hundred students each; twelve, from one hundred to two hundred each, and six had enrolled between two hundred and three hundred each. One seminary had three hundred and three students and another had four hundred and twenty-three.

Of the total of one hundred and thirty-five medical schools in the United States seventy-three reported buildings and grounds worth $16,473,489 for the education of their 12,624 students, or $1,304 per student; while one hundred and seven Protestant seminaries had buildings and grounds valued at $14,384,300 for the education of their 5,905 students, or $2,435 per student. An income of $1,678,470 was reported by sixty-two medical schools for their 10,631 students, which was one hundred and fifty-seven dollars per student. One hundred and thirteen theological seminaries of all denominations reported an income, exclusive of benefactions, of $1,935,472 for their 7,110 students, or two hundred and seventy dollars per student. And yet at a meeting in Chicago, February, 1910, the council on education in the American Medical Association declared that there were too many medical schools in the United States and that the work could be done more economically and satisfactorily to both students and the general public by

one-half as many schools. These facts indicate very great waste in theological education as it is conducted to-day.

Appendix B

The membership of churches in Vinton, Iowa, follows: Presbyterian five hundred, Methodist Episcopal five hundred and twenty, Disciples three hundred and eighty, Baptists one hundred and sixty, United Brethren one hundred and sixty. These five churches serve a population of 3,215. Their houses of worship are valued at $113,000. Three parsonages are worth $14,500. Five pastors and one assistant receive $7,800 annually. Two churches pay three hundred and five dollars for choristers and three pay two hundred and eighty for organists. Light and water cost two hundred and forty dollars; fuel and gas five hundred and seventy-one dollars; insurance one hundred and seventy-eight dollars; janitors seven hundred dollars. Sunday-schools cost nine hundred and sixty-five dollars.

The items above named cost the churches of the town $10,734. When repairs, music, printing, postage and other incidentals are included, the total expense to the town will exceed $12,000 annually, exclusive of benevolences.

The Catholic and German churches own property worth about $3,500 and maintain their organizations at a cost of about seven hundred dollars.

The total membership of the five leading churches is 1,720. The combined Sunday morning audiences, as reported by the pastors, average 1,235; evening audiences nine hundred. Prayer-meeting attendance

averages one hundred and seventy; Sunday-schools nine hundred and sixty-five. The largest Sunday morning audience is four hundred; the smallest one hundred and twenty-five; the average two hundred and forty-nine. The largest evening audience is two hundred and fifty; the smallest sixty-five; the average one hundred and eighty. The largest Sunday-school is three hundred; the smallest one hundred and twenty; the average one hundred and ninety-three. The largest prayer-meeting is fifty-five; the smallest twenty; the average thirty-four.

It may be interesting to compare city taxes with church expenses for the town. The taxable property of the city at a low estimate amounts to $3,294,166. One-fourth of this is taxable. City taxes for all purposes aggregate $21,997. This was the sum collected for the year ending March 31, 1912. School taxes in addition to this amount to a little more than $17,000 annually.

The town spends over $13,000 annually to maintain seven churches; $21,997 for all city purposes and over $17,000 for schools.

For further discussion of the situation in this town see close of Appendix C.

Appendix C

The membership of the eight churches of Washington, Iowa, is as follows: Episcopal, twenty; Methodist, 1,000; Baptist, two hundred and sixty-three; Presbyterian, North, four hundred and thirty-one; First United Presbyterian, three hundred and twenty;

Second United Presbyterian, three hundred and thirty-five; Reformed Presbyterian, sixty; and Associate Presbyterian, fifty-four.

Eight houses of worship are valued at $104,500; five manses are valued at $22,000; they pay $9,800 for six pastors full time and one two-thirds time. One church pays a chorister one hundred dollars; other choristers are voluntary. Three organists receive two hundred and ninety dollars. Light and water cost four hundred and fifty-five dollars; fuel and gas six hundred and sixty-one dollars; insurance costs six churches two hundred and forty-three dollars; janitors cost seven churches $1,015; Sunday-schools cost $1,410.

The items enumerated cost the town $13,974. When other necessary items are added the total expense will reach something near $16,000 annually, exclusive of benevolences.

The Presbyterians alone have five houses of worship valued at $85,000 and three manses valued at $15,000. They pay $6,200 annually for pastors. Not one has a paid chorister and only one has a paid organist. They paid six hundred and sixty-five dollars for janitors and seven hundred and ninety-five dollars for Sunday-schools.

The Episcopal church has a house of worship, twenty members, no Sunday-school or mid-week service. Pastor's salary, when they have one, is provided by their Bishop, which means that it is a mission. They have now no regular services.

The total membership of these eight churches is 2,483. The average Sunday morning attendance of all, as reported by the pastors, is 1,775; the average evening attendance is nine hundred and ninety. An average of 1,813 attend Sunday-school, and two hun-

dred and eighty, the prayer-meeting. The largest prayer-meeting is seventy-five ; they run as low as fifteen ; the average is thirty-five. The largest Sunday-school is nine hundred, the smallest, thirty ; the average is two hundred and fifty-nine. The largest Sunday morning audience is five hundred ; the smallest, fifty ; the average is two hundred and fifty-three. The largest Sunday evening audience is five hundred ; the smallest, one hundred and twenty-five ; the average is one hundred and ninety-eight. Three churches have no evening services.

The towns of Vinton and Washington are exceptional in the number of churchgoers, church-members and in the amounts contributed to religious work. Since pastors naturally like to make as good showing as possible the attendance is probably overestimated. But these towns show denominationalism at its best. They were chosen for that reason. But what a miserable condition both towns exhibit. What might they not do if they were unified ?

A unified church in these towns would put within easy reach the very best of everything. One Protestant church each would perhaps be sufficient, or two, with territory properly divided. Larger attendance at all the services would put new life into all departments of the work ; the pastors would have something to inspire their best efforts. Large chorus choirs, composed of the best musical talent of the towns, and first-class paid organists and choristers would become possible. Fewer pastors would be required. The churches could engage and keep higher grade ministers and provide them living salaries. The time now wasted in "holy rivalry" could be spent in extending the kingdom of God. With competition eliminated

no soul would be neglected in the ministrations. The gain would be incalculable.

Appendix D

In Illinois forty-four communities in thirteen different counties in the eastern central part of the state were investigated. The total population studied was 114,975. The report includes rural districts and towns up to 3,000 population. The survey covers four topics: economic, sociological, educational and religious.

There were evidences of prosperity everywhere. Land had doubled in price in ten years; fifty-three per cent. of the farmers were tenants and forty-seven per cent. owners of their farms. Only a few years before all the farms had been operated by owners. Within a few years many had sold to speculators or to large landowners and moved to the cities and towns. There was found only a beginning of scientific farming. Prosperity was found among seventy-five per cent. of the families; twelve per cent. were marked fair; while thirteen per cent. were marked poor. Eight communities had an increase in population in ten years; eight had decreased; the remaining were about stationary. Of the population ninety-seven per cent. were industrious. Only ten per cent. were foreigners; twenty-four per cent. were the first generation of descendants from foreigners; and sixty-six per cent. were American. Twenty per cent. of the communities had trolley lines; ninety per cent. had telephones; ninety-seven per cent. living out of towns had rural free delivery.

Absolutely no amusements or recreation were found

in fifty-eight per cent. of the communities. In sixty-three per cent. of the communities the church provided some social life. "Nearly all of these affairs," says the report, "have on them the dollar mark, as though created for revenue only." Fifteen communities had lecture courses promoted by business men. Four had Chautauquas; eighteen had picture shows of reasonably high grade. In twenty-seven communities there were literary clubs among the women only. Only six organizations that could be called agricultural could be found, although the whole section was agricultural. In seventy-five per cent. of the communities where baseball was found it was played on Sunday. Public dances were low. In nineteen communities morals showed improvement; in fifteen morals were at a standstill; while ten showed deterioration. The social centres in the order of preference were: stores, restaurants, pool-rooms, saloons, town halls, elevators, shops and barber shops.

Less than five per cent. were illiterate. Ten public libraries were quite well patronized, but light popular fiction furnished the chief reading. Few school buildings had ample ground for play, and only one or two had play rooms. Sanitation was unsatisfactory. Rural school buildings were generally old and out of date —one room, low ceilings, dingy and dark. Salaries of teachers were low, especially in the country, with the result of a steady decrease of men teachers. The majority of teachers were town-bred girls without interest or sympathy in the affairs of rural uplift.

The forty-four communities had two hundred and twenty-five churches, an average of over five churches to the community, of twenty different denominations including Catholics. Only seventy-seven of these

churches had grown any in ten years; forty-five were at a standstill; fifty-six had lost in membership; while forty-seven had been abandoned within ten years. This number of abandoned churches were still standing; but many others had been torn down during that time. The report says that if the same proportion of abandoned churches prevails over the state, exclusive of Chicago, that there were at that time 1,600 churches in Illinois that had been abandoned within ten years and were still standing. During the ten years previous to the survey only thirty-four per cent. of the churches had grown; sixty-six per cent. were at a standstill, dying or dead. Of forty-seven abandoned churches twenty-nine were rural.

Only nineteen per cent. of the population attended church regularly. Fifty per cent. of Protestant church members did not attend. Only thirteen per cent. of the population attended Sunday-school regularly and this included children in catechism classes in the liturgical churches. There was one church to every five hundred and eleven of the population, with an average membership of one hundred and sixty-eight, and an average attendance of ninety-three. And there were thirty rural communities that had no church, not even one within five miles.

Of the total population forty-eight per cent. were absolutely untouched by the church. Thirteen living churches paid no regular salary to a pastor. The average pastor's salary was only $837.35. And this was in a rich corn belt where an acre of corn often sold at $225. One church had a consecrated young pastor at $500 per year; while among the farmer members of his church during the year previous to the survey six automobiles, all high priced, had been

purchased. With the exception of one denomination it was a rare thing to find any increase in ministers' salaries within recent years; and yet wealth was increasing rapidly.

In Pennsylvania fifty-three communities were investigated. They were located in eight counties in the central part of the state. The total population studied was 124,203. Forty-four per cent. of the people resided in the open country and fifty-six per cent. in villages. Of farmers only thirty-one per cent. were tenants and sixty-nine per cent. owned their farms. Practically no modern methods of farming were found; none except in a very few communities. Forty-eight per cent. of the communities were increasing in population; thirty-five per cent. were stationary; while seventeen per cent. were decreasing. Most of the people were American. The few foreigners worked in the mines chiefly. Local markets were poor and that condition seriously affected the farmer's prosperity. Over ninety-two per cent. of the people were industrious. Ninety per cent. of the communities were located on at least one line of railroad; nineteen per cent. had the advantage of trolley facilities; and ninety-six per cent. had rural free delivery.

In fifty-eight per cent. of the communities the facilities for recreation were poor; in twenty-seven per cent. fair; and in only fifteen per cent. were they found to be good. Recreations promoted by the church were hardly worth mention. Whatever the church did was for revenue. The great majority of the amusements of the people were wholesome. Only three per cent. each of the amusements were dancing and cards. But three per cent. only consisted each in lectures and concerts. The social centres were as fol-

lows: stores forty-six per cent.; pool-rooms twelve per cent.; post-offices twelve per cent.; Young Men's Christian Associations six per cent.; streets six per cent.; saloons four per cent.; hotels three per cent.; railway stations three per cent.; other places eight per cent.

Only five per cent. of the population were illiterate. With the exception of seven the schoolhouses for the farmers were of one room. Seven communities had consolidated their schools, or were actively discussing it. Facilities for play, sanitation and teachers' salaries were not reported. Doubtless they were poor.

The fifty-three communities had three hundred and forty-eight churches, or one church to every three hundred and fifty-seven people. Forty-two per cent. of the population belonged to some church. Of these sixty-nine per cent. attended church regularly. These churchgoers were only twenty-nine per cent. of the whole population. Fifty per cent. of the churches were growing; twenty-six per cent. were standing still; while twenty-four per cent. were declining. No abandoned churches were mentioned in the report. Considerable over-churching was found. This may be seen in the fact that there was one church to every three hundred and fifty-seven people. With a standard of one church within a radius of five miles, five communities had unchurched sections. The report suggests that certain Presbyterian churches ought to be abandoned. In six communities the salaries of Presbyterian ministers were not paid promptly. No report as to the average minister's salaries was made.

In Missouri the whole of Adair, Sullivan and Knox Counties in the northeast part of the state were studied. These counties contained a population of 53,701. Of this number 35,495 lived in the country; 5,551 lived in

twenty-three villages under seven hundred and fifty population; and the remaining 12,655 lived in towns of over seven hundred and fifty population.

Land values had increased over one hundred per cent. in twelve years. Only fifteen per cent. of tenants were found; while eighty-five per cent. of the farmers owned their farms. The increase in land values had increased rentals which had forced many to sell and move West in order to find cheaper land. Farming methods were traditional generally. The rural population was decreasing at an alarming rate. This condition was found due to other causes in addition to increased value of land. Many well-to-do farmers were removing to the towns to find better educational advantages for their children; and retiring farmers also were removing to the towns. Six railroads touched parts of these counties. There were no trolleys or interurbans. Practically all the farmers had rural free delivery; and eighty-three per cent. had telephones. The roads were very bad; in winter almost impassable much of the time. Only a small proportion of foreigners and a few negroes were found. Nearly everybody worked.

Recreation facilities were badly deficient. The church did nothing in this line except to raise money. A little Sunday baseball, an occasional dance, a few picnics in summer, an occasional ice-cream sociable and a school entertainment or two were about the average for the community. The social centres were the stores, streets, restaurants, pool-rooms and "speak-easies." The lodge rooms were so used occasionally; and the church furnished a visiting place after the services. Morality was good. No lecture courses, Chautauquas or literary clubs were found.

The rural schoolhouses were all of one room and all but one were frame buildings. There was not a consolidated school in the three counties. The village schools had from one to four rooms; the town schools had from eight to ten rooms. Probably two per cent. of the whites were illiterate. In general the school system and equipment were very poor. Teachers' salaries were poor. The teacher's average tenure was less than a year.

There were five Catholic churches with four or five out stations affiliated. The total Catholic membership was 2,925. There were one hundred and eighty Protestant churches, one hundred and fifty-nine of which were still used at least occasionally; and twenty-one were totally abandoned. That left one living Protestant church for every three hundred and nineteen non-Catholic population. Only twenty-nine per cent. of the whole population were church-members; while seventy-one per cent. belonged to no church. A study of six hundred and nine families of farmers in Sullivan County indicated that forty-two per cent. of the farmers' families attended church regularly; twenty-eight per cent. attended occasionally; and thirty per cent. never attended. About eighteen per cent. of the total population attended Protestant Sunday-schools.

Of the country churches ninety-two per cent. had ministers one-quarter time or less; eight per cent. had ministers one-half time. Not one country church had a minister full time. Of the village churches (population seven hundred and fifty or less) seventy-seven per cent. had ministers one-quarter time; twenty-one per cent. one-half time; and two per cent. full time. In the towns (population over seven hundred and fifty) fifteen per cent. of the churches had ministers one-

quarter time ; fifty per cent. one-half time ; and thirty-five per cent. full time. This means that ninety-two per cent. of the country churches, seventy-seven per cent. of the village churches, and fifteen per cent. of the town churches had ministers one-quarter time—a three hour a month ministry. In the whole three counties only two ministers resided in the country. Only two of the eighty-three villages had resident ministers. One of these was a superannuated preacher almost illiterate. His church paid him from one dollar and fifty cents to five dollars per month. Once they had paid him seven dollars. A study of three hundred and seventy families in Sullivan County revealed the fact that the average family spent annually seven hundred and seventy-one dollars on themselves, thirteen dollars and seventy-two cents on their schools, six dollars on their roads, and three dollars and eighteen cents on their churches.

Two of the twenty-one abandoned churches were in villages and nineteen in the country. If these three counties are representative of general conditions the report indicates that there were seven hundred and fifty abandoned churches in the state. Less than one-half of the country churches were increasing in membership ; and only twenty-six per cent. of the churches as a whole were growing. Over-churched communities were the rule. In twenty-three villages averaging two hundred and forty-one persons each, there were fifty-six churches. Four villages had four churches each ; and two of these villages had less than two hundred and twenty-five inhabitants. No community was found where within a radius of five miles from one to ten churches were not found.

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